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THE CHUZZLEWITS

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No. 5 Hamilton Place, Boston, Massachusetts

The Chuzzlewits

Or, Tom Pinch

A Dramatization in Five Acts of Charles Dickens'
famous novel "Martin Chuzzlewit"

By
FRANK E. FOWLE

NOTE

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BOSTON
WALTER H. BAKER & CO.

1916

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The Chuzzlewits

CHARACTERS

MR. SETH PECKSNIFF, *architect*. "A moral man, an exemplary man, with a Fortunatus's purse of good sentiments on his inside."

MR. ANTHONY CHUZZLEWIT. "The face of the old man was so sharpened by the wariness and cunning of his own life that it seemed to cut him a passage through the crowded room."

MR. JONAS CHUZZLEWIT, *his son*. "This fine young man had all the inclination to be a profligate of the first water and only lacked the one good trait in the common catalogue of debauched vice—open handedness."

OLD MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT. "Universal self! Was there nothing of its shadow in the history of Martin Chuzzlewit, on his own showing?"

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, *his grandson*. "Young—one and twenty, perhaps—and handsome."

TOM PINCH. "An ungainly, awkward looking man; far from handsome, but notwithstanding his attire and his clumsy figure, one would not have been disposed, unless Mr. Pecksniff said so, to consider him a bad fellow by any means."

MR. MONTAGUE TIGG. "He was very bold and very mean; very swaggering and very slinking; very much like a man who might have been something better, and unspeakably like a man who deserved to be something worse."

OLD CHUFFEY. "He looked as if he had been put away and forgotten half a century before, and somebody had just found him in a lumber closet."



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DEC -8 1915

CHARACTERS

BAILEY. "An undersized boy ; and yet he winked the winks, and thought the thoughts, and did the deeds, and said the sayings of an ancient man."

MR. MOULD. "He looked as a man might, who, in the very act of smacking his lips over choice old wine, tried to make believe it was physic."

LEWSOME. "A young man—dark and not ill-looking—dimly finding fear and horror everywhere."

MR. NADGETT. "Mr. Nadgett's eyes were seldom fixed on any other object than the ground, the clock, or the fire ; but every button on his coat might have been an eye : he saw so much."

MR. MODDLE. "A dismal young gentleman," and no wonder.

TWO POLICE OFFICERS.

MARY GRAHAM. "All the charms of youth and maidenhood clustered on her gentle brow."

MERCY PECKSNIFF. "She was the most arch and at the same time the most artless creature that you can possibly imagine. It was her great charm."

CHARITY PECKSNIFF. "With her strong sense, and her mild yet not reproachful gravity, was so well named and did so well set off and illustrate her sister."

SARAH GAMP. "Like most persons who have attained to great eminence in their profession, she took to hers very kindly ; inso-much that setting aside her natural predilections as a woman, she went to a lying-in or laying-out with equal zest and relish."

BETSY PRIG, *a friend of Sarah's*. "One of the best of creatures."

JANE. Pecksniff's servant.

MAID.

HINTS AS TO COSTUMES, MAKE-UP, Etc.

PECKSNIFF. Smooth face—grizzled gray hair, brushed off his forehead and standing bolt upright—heavy drooping arched eyebrows. Plain black clothes—double eye-glass on cord—high collar, long points—white cravat, fastened behind—large handkerchief. Manner: soft and oily.

ANTHONY CHUZZLEWIT. A mean, covetous looking old man; smooth face—sharp features—red eyes. Dress: rusty double-breasted, swallow tail, high collared coat of the period. Tight trousers. Dicky and stock. Manner: mean and miserly. Very bald—long, thin white hair.

JONAS CHUZZLEWIT. A second edition of his father; the same features and general appearance of meanness. Rusty brown crop wig. Plain dark clothes of no particular color. Dicky and stock.

OLD MARTIN. Of a more benevolent appearance than Anthony but of something the same general character. Hair whiter and more of it. Dress: plain and neat, tight trousers, white gaiters. Wears skullcap. Carries a stout cane.

MARTIN. Handsome make-up—long brown hair. In first act, scene 2 of third, and last act, dressed stylishly and well. In scene 1 of third act is shabby.

TOM PINCH. An ungainly, awkward looking man. Extremely short-sighted and prematurely bald. About thirty years old but might be any age between sixteen and sixty. Dress: a snuff colored suit, shrunk and twisted and too small for him.

TIGG. In Act I very shabby—coat of military cut—frogged and buttoned up to neck. Gloves through which his fingers protrude—strapped trousers, pulled up very tight. Dilapidated hat. Full and very shaggy hair—fierce, shaggy mustache. General appearance very dirty and very jaunty and swaggering. In Act II, very flashily dressed. In Act IV, dressing gown. In Acts II and IV has full whiskers.

CHUFFEY. A little, bleary-eyed, weazen-faced, ancient man. Long white hair. Dress: of an ancient pattern; a decayed suit of black—knee breeches, tied at the knees with wisps of rusty ribbon. Dingy worsted stockings of the same color as his breeches.

BAILEY. A small boy with the general appearance of an old man, in that his face betokens great shrewdness. Dress in Act II a suit of cast-off clothes, much too large for him. In Act IV, showy livery with cockade in hat.

MOULD. A little elderly man—bald. Dress: Black clothes—massive gold watch-chain dangling from fob. Melancholy face.

LEWSOME. A young man—dark hair—very pale. Dress: Act III, shabby dressing gown, slippers. Act V, street clothes of the period.

NADGETT. A sharp-featured man, rather stoop shouldered, his eyes generally on the ground. Walks with a quiet, slinking manner. Shows no emotion—speaks quietly. All movements stealthy and secretive. Dress: dark, long coat, low crowned, wide brimmed hat. Has a voluminous pocketbook full of memorandums on slips of paper, which he carries in his inside coat pocket.

MR. MODDLE. Full dark wig, hair long and brushed down over the ears. Face very pale and melancholy. Dress: dark and plain; a young man of the period.

MARY GRAHAM. Very pretty but pale; dark brown hair. Dress: plain but very becoming.

CHARITY. A silly old maid. Hair knotted in the back and tied with a large bow of ribbon. Dress: Close fitting waist and full skirt of the period, white cuffs and berth. In Act IV she wears a shawl and bonnet.

MERCY. Younger and much more attractive than her sister. Hair done in rows of curls. Dress: similar to Charity's but more juvenile and in lighter colors. Manner: vivacious (kittenish) in Acts I and II. In Act IV she is pale and disheveled.

SARAH GAMP. A fat old woman—husky voice—face red and swollen—very red nose. Dress: very rusty black gown with shawl to correspond and calash. In Act III carries a large gingham umbrella, tied around the handle and bulging out in the middle, and a bundle tied up in a large handkerchief, containing an enormous nightcap and a loose jacket.

BETSY PRIG. Of the Gamp build but not so fat, has a deep voice, something like a man's. Has something of a beard.

For more details see the book and Cruikshank's drawings.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Parlor at Mr. Pecksniff's. Wiltshire.

ACT II.—Room in house of Mr. Anthony Chuzzlewit. London.

ACT III.—*Scene 1*: Garden at Mr. Pecksniff's.

Scene 2: Room in an Inn at Holborn.

ACT IV.—*Scene 1*: Apartment at Montague Tigg's. London.

Scene 2: At Anthony Chuzzlewit's—same as Act II.

ACT V.—The same as previous scene.

IMPORTANT

The undersigned will coach
this play for any organiza-
tion or club. For rates apply
to Frank E. Fowle, 311 Sum-
mer St., Malden, Mass.

The Chuzzlewits

ACT I

SCENE.—*Living-room at PECKSNIFF'S. Doors L. I E. and R. 3 E. Fireplace down R. Window up C. Centre-table up stage, C. Chairs by table and down L.*

(*As curtain rises, MR. SETH PECKSNIFF in easy chair before fireplace. MERCY PECKSNIFF on low stool R. of fireplace. CHARITY PECKSNIFF on low stool at fireplace below PECKSNIFF.*)

PECK. (*gazing at the fire, his hands in his lap, the tips of his fingers joined*). Yes, my dears, even the worldly goods of which we have just disposed, even cream, sugar, tea, toast, ham——

CHAR. And eggs.

PECK. And eggs, even, have their moral. See how they come and go! Every pleasure is transitory. We can't even eat long. If we indulge in harmless fluids we get the dropsy; if in exciting liquids we get drunk. What a soothing reflection is that.

CHAR. Don't say *we* get drunk, papa.

PECK. When I say *we*, my dear, I mean mankind in general. Mercy, my dear, stir the fire and throw up the cinders. (*MER. does so, and takes her stool near PECK., and leans her face and hands against his knee. CHAR. draws nearer the fire.*) Yes, I have been again fortunate in the attainment of my object. A new inmate will shortly be among us.

CHAR. A youth, papa?

PECK. Ye-es, a youth. He will avail himself of the eligible opportunity which now offers of uniting the advantages of the best practical architectural education with the comforts of a home with some who are not unmindful of their moral responsibilities.

MER. Oh, pa! see advertisement.

PECK. Playful, playful warbler!

MER. Is he handsome, papa?

CHAR. Silly Merry. What is the premium, pa? Tell us that.

MER. Oh! good gracious, Cherry! What a mercenary girl you are. Oh, you naughty, thoughtful, prudent thing!

PECK. He is well looking enough. I do not positively expect any immediate premium from him.

CHAR. } Pa!
MER. }

PECK. But what of that! (*Smiles at the fire.*) If our inclinations are but good let us follow them boldly, even though they bring upon us loss instead of profit. Eh! Charity? (*He turns to her solemnly; they smile at him meaningly, and his face gradually relaxes. They both laugh. MER., getting up on his right knee, kisses him. PECK. recovers himself.*) Tut! Tut! What folly is this?

CHAR. Pa, have you any news of our odious cousin, old Martin Chuzzlewit?

PECK. My dear, you shouldn't call our dear relative odious; remember that he is ill, and that blood is thicker than water.

MER. (*playfully*). And so is mud, pa.

PECK. Hush, my merry one, the subject is too serious for jest. The whole family are swooping down upon poor Mr. Chuzzlewit like vultures upon a body.

MER. Lor, pa!

PECK. Yes, I met two of these—ahem—relatives, just as I was leaving the bar parlor. Our Cousin Anthony and his son Jonas.

CHAR. And that—that person, Miss Mary Graham, is she still with Mr. Martin Chuzzlewit?

PECK. My dear, I regret to say that Miss Graham still waits, with apparent devotion, upon our wealthy but weak and misguided relative, and that he, instead of disposing himself to listen to the promptings of nature, is still deceived by the voice of the——

MER. Go on, pa.

PECK. The truth is, my dear, I am at a loss for a word. The name of those fabulous animals, Pagan animals I regret to say, who used to sing in the water has quite escaped me.

CHAR. Swans, pa?

PECK. No, my dear, not swans, yet very like swans too. Thank you.

MER. Oysters, pa?

PECK. No, nor oysters, my love. But by no means unlike oysters. Thank you very much. Wait! I have it—sirens; dear me, not oysters nor swans, but sirens, sirens of course. Yes, our misguided relative still listens to the voice of the siren, and will take his barley water or chicken broth from no other hands but hers. And now, my dears, what is the domestic news since yesterday?

(*Knocking heard off L.*)

Enter JANE.

JANE. Mr. Anthony Chuzzlewit, Mr. Jonas Chuzzlewit, Mr. Tigg.

(*Girls rise. Enter MR. ANTHONY CHUZZLEWIT, MR. JONAS CHUZZLEWIT and MR. MONTAGUE TIGG. PECK. crosses to greet them.*)

PECK. (R. C.). Ah! Dear friends, this is pleasant. My daughters, Mercy, Charity, Mr. Anthony Chuzzlewit, Mr. Jonas Chuzzlewit, Mr. Tigg.

(PECK., R. C. ANTH., C. JONAS, L. C. TIGG, L.)

JONAS (L. C.). Well, Pecksniff, this is what we've come about. Old Martin Chuzzlewit was laid up, we heard, and so father and I came down to look after the old fellow. We followed him to this village, and here he's laid up again. He'll croak, that's very evident, and as we are his near relatives we ought to look sharp after him—and the money. You'd like to get it all to yourself, Pecksniff, I know—but you won't.

ANTH. (C.). Shrewd lad, Jonas, my own son! Shrewd lad!

PECK. (R. C.). Indeed you wrong me. Money to me is no temptation. No one values it less than I do.

TIGG (L.). I'm sure of that. You wrong my worthy friend, Pecksniff. He's an open, liberal-hearted individual. (*Crosses to PECK.*) Pecksniff, a word. Excuse us.

(PECK. and TIGG advance C.)

ANTH. (*crossing to JONAS, L. C.*). Yes—plot, plot against us, do. Never mind—never mind. We'll outwit them, won't we, Jonas?

JONAS. There, hold your tongue!

(*Crosses to MER. and CHAR., R. ANTH. sits L.*)

PECK. Pardon me, sir, but as yet I am not thoroughly acquainted with who you are.

TIGG. Who I am? Tigg, sir. I'm Tigg, the particular friend of Chevy Slyme, Esq. You know Chevy, a nephew of Chuzzlewit? By chance, quite chance, we happened to be in this place on our way to, what do you call it, you know the place, when Chev deputed me to call and consult you respecting the health of his relative.

PECK. Why did not Mr. Slyme come himself?

TIGG. He's waiting 'round the corner. Every man of true genius has his peculiarity, and the peculiarity of my friend Slyme is that he is always waiting 'round the corner. In a word, Pecksniff, my friend Chev deputed me to deliver that note into your hands.

PECK. (*reading note*). Hum! he requires the loan of five shillings.

TIGG. Five shillings, eh? What an extraordinary fellow! Very moderate, too, isn't he? You are not in want of change, are you?

PECK. No, thank you.

TIGG. Oh! if you had been I'd have got it for you.

PECK. Sir, you are very obliging. No.

TIGG. Oh! (*Pause. They look at each other.*) Perhaps you'd rather not lend Slyme five shillings now?

PECK. I couldn't do it.

TIGG. Half-a-crown, perhaps?

PECK. No, not even half-a-crown, sir.

TIGG. Why, then, we come to the ridiculously small amount of eighteen pence, eh? Ha, ha, ha!

PECK. That, sir, would be equally objectionable.

TIGG (*seizing both his hands*). Pecksniff, you are one of the most consistent and remarkable men I ever met with. I earnestly desire to become better acquainted with you. You are really a noble-hearted individual! (*To JONAS.*) Sir, your servant. (*To ANTH.*) Chuzzlewit, yours. Ladies, yours to your shoe-strings. (*Aside.*) I'll hook this agreeable party yet somehow. (*Aloud.*) Ta-ta! [*Exit, L.*]

PECK. (*crossing L. to ANTH.*). I repeat, Mr. Chuzzlewit, I only visited the invalid from feelings of humanity.

ANTH. (*seated L.*). Humanity! Pecksniff, you are a hypocrite. We are all hypocrites. I'm a hypocrite, so is my son!

(*Rises and crosses to door, L.*)

JONAS (R. C.). Speak for yourself, you old fool. (*Crosses to PECK.*) That's rather a nice girl of yours, Pecksniff. (*Aside.*) She's got money, I know. (*Aloud.*) She that laughs so. I think she laughs at the old un here. Good-bye, girls. (*Crosses R. C.*) Good-bye, Cherry! I must have a kiss before I go.

CHAR. (R. C.). Oh! Really, Mr. Jonas—I declare—I'm so —

JONAS. Don't alarm yourself, I don't mean you. I shall have a kiss of the other one. (*Crosses to MER., R.*)

MER. (*down R.*). Indeed you shan't! Go along, you fright! I hate you!

JONAS. I say I will! (*Tries to seize her.*)

MER. Will you?—bear! (*Slaps his face.*)

JONAS (*crossing to C., savagely, aside*). I should like to make your heart bleed for that! (*Aloud.*) Come along, father; stir your stupid old legs, will you? (*Pushes ANTH. out L.*) Good-bye.

(*He turns to look back. MER. laughs at him.*)

MER. (R.). Go along, fright!

(*JONAS scowls and exits, L. MER. goes to fireplace. CHAR. sits on stool and scowls at her.*)

PECK. (C.). Oh! avarice, avarice—how hideous are you! But let us not be too hard upon our fellow creatures. Charity, when I take my chamber candlestick to-night, remind me to be more than usually particular in praying for Mr. Anthony Chuzzlewit, who has done me an injustice. It is near the time, my children, that I expect Mr. Pinch home with my new pupil, and I think it will be prudent not to tell him that his grandfather, old Martin Chuzzlewit, is in this vicinity. I abhor deceit, but — (*Knock at door, L.*) There's a knock! Be employed, children. (*Takes book.*) It may be Martin.

(*They sit. He reads. They work.*)

Enter TOM PINCH, conducting young MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT.

PECK. (*looking up*). Bless my life! (*Rises.*) Martin, my dear boy, I am delighted to see you! (*Embraces him.*) Here are my daughters, Martin. You have not beheld them since you were infants together.

(*The ladies curtsy and he shakes hands with them, R. C.*)

MAR. (R. C.). I trust that acquaintance will be sufficient to make us feel like old friends.

PECK. A noble sentiment, my dear young man. We are a happy family, sir,—very happy! Martin, you must be tired. My innocents, retire, whilst my dear Martin partakes of some refreshment.

(*CHAR. and MER., taking their work with them, cross L.*)

MER. Certainly, pa.

MAR. Pray, ladies, don't move.

(*They smile blandly.*)

TOM (L.). Yes, pray, ladies, don't go.

(*MER. bursts into a loud laugh at TOM, and CHAR. tosses up her head. They exeunt, L.*)

PECK. A deal of nature's graceful dignity in my eldest child,—a noble creature! As to Merry, as we call her, in her face "laughter is perpetually holding both his sides," as the poet has it. An innocent lamb! (*Crosses to table up c.*) My dear Martin, here are sandwiches, biscuits, home-made wine, an orange,—almost. (*Takes up half an orange.*) Mr. Pinch will get you anything else you require.

Enter JANE, L.

JANE. You are wanted, sir. An elderly gentleman—

PECK. (*stopping her*). Hem! yes, that will do—I'm coming. (*Exit JANE.*) There's a portfolio yonder; you can amuse yourself. All my own designs. Salisbury Cathedral from the north, south, east, west—a wine cellar—an almshouse—a jail—a powder magazine—a portico and a pump—all my own designs! I shall soon return. You must be very hungry, so eat heartily. [*Exit, L.*]

TOM (*going to table up c.*). Yes, eat heartily. Look! here are sandwiches, home-made wine and half an orange.

MAR. (*throwing himself carelessly into a chair before the fire, R., and putting his feet on the hob*). D—n the sandwiches and home-made wine! Rubbish!

TOM. Oh, dear! You don't mean it! Beautiful!

MAR. Do you think so? Then eat and enjoy it. (*Sits looking into the fire. After a pause.*) A dull village this.

TOM. I don't find it dull, Mr. Chuzzlewit.

MAR. No — ? How do you amuse yourself?

TOM. There are some delightful walks, and in the church there is the sweetest little organ you ever heard; and on Sundays and at the week-day services I play it for them. And sometimes when there are no services I get the keys and go down and play for hours together, long after it is dark. I like to play in the dark. The old organ never seems so sweet to me as then.

MAR. Ah! what do you get for all this, now?

TOM. Nothing.

MAR. Well, you are a strange fellow.

TOM. When I say nothing, I don't mean that. It has led to my passing some of the happiest hours I know, and it led to my seeing one of the loveliest and most beautiful faces you can possibly picture to yourself. I saw her standing just inside the porch; I didn't leave off playing, though, and she came again to hear me the next morning and the next evening. But I have not seen her now for some time, and it's very unlikely I shall ever look on her face again.

MAR. And you never followed her?

TOM. Why should I disturb her? I heard she was a relative or companion of a gentleman staying at the Dragon. I would have gone on playing the organ until I was an old man to have given her a minute's pleasure every day—quite contented if she sometimes thought of a poor fellow like me as part of the music. (*Fills glass and sits on stool behind MAR.*) How melancholy you are! You were not so as we came home together.

MAR. Why, the fact is, Pinch —

(*MAR. turns, and seeing TOM sitting on a stool behind him, bursts into a fit of laughter.*)

TOM. Ah! you are laughing at me. That's right! Cheer up! That's capital!

MAR. (*turning to TOM*). I never saw such a fellow as you

are, Pinch. Deuce take it! I must talk openly to some one. I'll talk openly to you, Pinch.

TOM. I shall take it as being very friendly of you.

MAR. I'm not in your way, am I?

(Notices that he is shielding TOM from the fire.)

TOM. Not at all.

MAR. You must know, then, that I've been bred up with great expectations; but for certain reasons I've been disinherited.

TOM *(eating)*. By your father?

MAR. No, my grandfather. I have no parents.

TOM. No? Neither have I. Ah—dear!

MAR. The old fellow has many good points, but two very great faults. He is provokingly obstinate and most abominably selfish.

TOM. Is he, though? Bless me!

MAR. I've heard they have always been the failings of our family, but, thank heaven, those vices have not descended to me. You don't care about the fire, do you? It's infernally cold!

TOM. Oh, dear, no, not at all. Go on.

(MAR. spreads himself before the fire, hiding it entirely from TOM.)

MAR. Well, Pinch, I fell in love with my grandfather's adopted daughter—his companion. Being full of jealousy and distrust, he suspected me of this.

TOM. Well, there was no crime in that.

MAR. Of course not! Well, he said nothing to her, but charged me with attempting to deprive him of the young creature he had trained to be his only companion; when at the same time he had arranged for me to marry in some way of his own.

TOM. Well, and what did you say?

(Draws close up to MAR.)

MAR. Say! Why, I started up! *(Rises and knocks TOM over.)* Told him he was a selfish old tyrant, and that I would dispose myself in marriage as I liked. A tremendous quarrel ensued, and the upshot was that I must renounce her or be

renounced by him. Now, you know I'm confoundedly—confoundedly — (*Stands by fire.*)

TOM. Obstinate, too!

MAR. No! What a fellow you are!

TOM. I thought you wanted a word.

MAR. I didn't want that word. Obstinacy is no part of my character. I wouldn't give an inch, and here I am.

TOM (*still on the floor*). Yes, here we are! You knew Pecksniff before?

MAR. Only by name, but I know his nature. I saw his advertisement for a pupil, and was doubly bent on coming to him, on account of his being —

TOM (*still on floor*). Such an excellent man! You are quite right; he is!

MAR. (*standing before fireplace*). I am not quite sure of that. No, because I knew my grandfather hated him, and after the old man's behavior I was determined to annoy him all in my power.

TOM. No, were you though?

MAR. But I won't lose the girl!

TOM. Don't be angry; all will be well in time; and if I can serve you —

MAR. Thank you! You're a good fellow! (*Crosses to TOM, shaking hands and helping him to rise.*) I'll tell you what you may do; and this moment too, if you like.

TOM (*readily*). What is it, my dear fellow?

MAR. I'm out of temper, and tired. I'll go and lie down, and you come and read to me.

TOM. I shall be delighted! (*Gets book.*)

MAR. (*yawning and leaning on mantel*). You needn't leave off when I'm getting drowsy. It's pleasant to wake gradually to the sounds again. Did you ever try it?

TOM. No, never!

MAR. (*crossing to TOM, putting his arm about him and going R. to door*). It's very pleasant. Try it, when you can persuade some simple-minded fellow to do it.

[*They exeunt, R.*

(PECK. *peeks in at door, L; seeing coast clear, enters, bowing, followed by OLD MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT.*)

OLD M. (*crossing to C.*). You are quite alone?

PECK. (*bowing lowly*). Quite, my dear sir, quite! My daughters are in their rooms, and —

OLD M. (*impatiently*). Yes, yes! but is he—is he out of the way? I do not choose to encounter him.

PECK. Your grandson Martin? Yes, he has evidently gone to his room to rest after his journey.

OLD M. Enough! Pecksniff, I regret that you and I held such a conversation as that of our last meeting.

PECK. Don't mention it, my dear cousin, I was honored by it. I—— (*Offers a chair.*)

OLD M. (*waving silence*). I repeat it—I very much regret having laid open to you what were then my thoughts of you as freely as I did. I am changed. My intentions are now altered. Deserted by those whom I loved, by those for whom I labored—beset by harpies—I now fly to you for refuge. I confide in you to attach yourself to me by ties of interest and expectation, and to help me to visit the consequence of meanness, dissimulation, and subtlety on the right heads.

(*Sits c. in chair offered by PECK.*)

PECK. (*bowing and rubbing his hands*). My noble sir, pray offer no bribes. From the purest affection, the purest love, the purest admiration of your excellent and generous nature, I am yours, heart and soul, beloved sir, I am yours.

OLD M. Do you never sit down?

PECK. Why, yes, occasionally.

OLD M. Will you do so now?

PECK. Delighted, my dear sir. (*Sits L.*)

OLD M. You remember what passed between us at a former interview?

PECK. I do, dear sir, and came home and prayed fervently that the film might fall from your blessed eyes, and that you might see me in my proper light.

OLD M. Pecksniff, I will see you in your proper light. You spoke to me disinterestedly of—I needn't name him—you know whom I mean.

PECK. Quite disinterestedly, I assure you.

OLD M. He is in your house as a pupil?

PECK. Yes, sir, he is.

OLD M. He must quit it.

PECK. For yours?

OLD M. For any shelter he can find. He has deceived me—he may you.

PECK. I hope not; I abominate deceit.

OLD M. He has made his matrimonial choice—crossed my fondest hopes; he shall never have from me one shilling.

PECK. (*rising*). I will turn him out directly! The serpent; the viper; to practice on those venerable gray hairs; to deceive his more than father, to say nothing at all of mother. To turn him out with ignominy will be treatment too good for such a crime.

OLD M. I am glad to find you so consistent, and that you second me so warmly. Pecksniff, you shall be my factor in all things—free and uncontrolled. Is it a bargain?

(*Holds out hand.*)

PECK. (*taking OLD M.'s hand, trying to cry and appear overcome*). This is too much, my—my dear sir—the honor—the —

OLD M. (*withdrawing his hand*). Pah! You agree?

PECK. (L. C.). Oh, yes!

(*Puts his handkerchief to his eyes as if overpowered.*)

OLD M. 'Tis well! Banish this boy, and you will prove that I am not deceived in you. Pecksniff—I am yours!

PECK. (*bowing servilely*). Oh!

OLD M. I regret not having known you sooner. If I had I should have used you, as you well deserve.

Enter CHAR. and MER., L.

PECK. My dears, oblige me by thanking heaven for this.

(*They go to OLD M., embrace him and lean affectionately on him.*)

OLD M. What are their names?

PECK. (L.). Mercy and Charity. Not unholy names, I hope, sir.

OLD M. Which is the younger?

(*MER. steps forward and curtseys.*)

PECK. Mercy, by five years. We sometimes venture to consider her rather a fine figure, sir. Speaking as an artist, I am naturally proud, if I may use the expression, to have a daughter who is constructed on the best models.

(*MER. trips away. CHAR. retires disgusted.*)

OLD M. She seems to have a lively disposition.

PECK. She has; her gaiety is delightful. She roves from parlor to bedroom, Mr. Chuzzlewit, like the bee. She skims from post to pillar like the butterfly, dipping her young beak into our current wine like the humming-bird. Speaking of wine, allow me to drink your health. (*Gets wine from side-board and hands glass to OLD M.*) Bless you! (*Drinks.*)

OLD M. I drink to you. (*Drinks. Makes wry face. Rises and puts glass on table.*) Now let me go. My dears, good-evening.

(*PECK. shakes hands with OLD M. ; his daughters kiss him.*)

OLD M. *exits L., followed by PECK. and his daughters with a great show of affection.*)

Enter TOM and MAR., from R.

TOM (*going down c.*). And so we've nothing more to show you. I dare say we shall begin work to-morrow. Do you like Mr. Pecksniff?

MAR. (*at fireplace*). He strikes me as being something of a shining light.

TOM. He is a shining light.

MAR. (*doubtfully*). Ah!

TOM. I don't know how it is, no one seems to know him as I do. I admire him, and reverence him. I am under obligations to him, Martin, that the devotion of a life will never repay.

(*Sits in chair, looking up at MAR.*)

MAR. Do you know, Tom Pinch, I seem to have known you for years. If I should turn out to be a great architect, I tell you what should be one of the things I'd build.

TOM. Aye, what?

MAR. Your fortune.

TOM. No, would you? How good of you!

MAR. That would be after I had made a name, and I should be married to her then, of course.

TOM. To the young lady we have spoken of?

MAR. To your beautiful spirit, yes.

TOM (*disturbed*). Oh, yes, of course.

MAR. And we should have, I hope, children about us. They'd be fond of you, Tom Pinch. (*TOM looks down, but is silent.*) Perhaps I might name one of them after you, Tom,

eh? Well, I don't know. Thomas Pinch Chuzzlewit—T. P. C. on his pinafores—she would like you, Pinch, I know.

TOM (*faintly*). Yes.

MAR. Oh, I know she would. And in honor of old times down here, we'd have an organ, and as you're fond of playing in the dark, in the dark it should be; and many's the summer evenings she and I will sit and listen to you, Tom.

(*Puts his hand on TOM's shoulder.*)

TOM (*much moved*). You are very considerate and affectionate, like everybody else who knows me. It shows the kindness of human nature, for I am sure I have no right to such goodness. (*Rises, goes up.*)

Enter PECK. from L.

PECK. You must be cold, Mr. Pinch. (*Ignores MAR.*) Pray come into a warm place, Pinch.

(*PECK. takes him and sits him on stool above fireplace, taking the easy chair himself. MAR. is up C.*)

TOM. I've been explaining to Mr. Martin —

PECK. Yes! Yes! we will not discuss that at present. And what have you been doing in the architectural way, Thomas, eh?

(*MAR. comes down L. C. TOM looks uneasily from PECK. to him, and is much embarrassed. PECK pokes fire and fidgets his chair with appearance of being occupied.*)

MAR. (L. C.). Now, Mr. Pecksniff, if you have sufficiently warmed and recovered yourself, I shall be glad to hear what you mean by this treatment of me. (*Pause. PECK. takes no notice. MAR. moves to C.*) Mr. Pecksniff, you heard what I said just now. Do me the favor to reply if you please. I ask you, what do you mean by this?

PECK. (*severely*). I will talk to you presently.

MAR. Presently will not do. I must trouble you to talk to me at once. Now—now!

PECK. (*rising*). Do you threaten me, sir? You have deceived me. You have obtained admission, sir, to this house on perverted statements and under false pretenses.

MAR. Good. I understand you now. My grandfather has been here—what more?

PECK. (R. C.). This much more. (*Trembles and tries to rub his hands as if cold.*) This lowly roof must not be contaminated by the presence of one who has cruelly deceived an honorable and venerated gentleman. I weep for your depravity, sir. I pity the withdrawal of yourself from the flowery paths (*striking his breast*) of purity and peace, but I cannot have a leper and a serpent for an inmate. Go forth, young man! like all who know you, I renounce you.

Enter MER. and CHAR. MAR. steps forward as if to strike PECK. TOM, who has risen, holds him back. MER. and CHAR. rush to PECK., who retreats momentarily, as if afraid, and then stands calmly looking up to ceiling, and with the tips of his fingers joined.

MAR. (L. C.). Pinch, let me go. Do you think a blow could make him a more abject creature than he is? Look at him, Pinch. (*TOM looks at PECK., who smiles benignly.*) I tell you he stands there disgraced, bought, used, a cloth for dirty hands, a lying, fawning, servile hound! and mark me, Pinch, the day will come—he knows it—see it written on his face while I speak—when even you will find him out, and will know him as I do. He renounce me! Cast your eyes on the renouncer, Pinch, and be the wiser for it.

(*MAR. points contemptuously at PECK. while he speaks. MER. and CHAR. cling around PECK.*)

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE.—*Room at ANTHONY'S. Door C. in flat. Doors R. and L. Fireplace, L. Table set for supper, C. Chairs R. and L. of it. Armchair at fireplace. Another armchair above fireplace. Old desk with drawers, R. Candle burning on mantel. Another on table.*

(ANTHONY seated in armchair before fire.)

ANTH. (*warming his hands over fire*). What a cold spring it is! It was a warmer season, sure, when I was young!

Enter JONAS, followed by CHAR. and MER., door in flat.

JONAS (*crossing to ANTH.*). You needn't go scorching your clothes into holes, whether it was or not. Broadcloth ain't so cheap as that comes to.

ANTH. A good lad! A prudent lad! He never delivered himself up to the vanities of dress. No, no!

JONAS (L. C.). Here are the gals.

ANTH. (*rising feebly*). Glad to see you, girls. Is your father coming?

CHAR. (C.). We expect him soon.

(*Titters and goes to MER., R.*)

JONAS. Well, ghost, is tea ready?

ANTH. (L.). I should think it was.

JONAS (*at table, C.*). What's the good of that? I should *think* it was. I want to know.

ANTH. (*sinking into chair at fireplace*). Ah! I don't know for certain.

JONAS. You don't know for certain? No, you don't know anything for certain, you don't. Give me your candle. (*Crosses to fireplace and takes candle.*) I want it for the gals.

(*He beckons the girls and they follow him into room, R.*)

ANTH. *busies himself poking fire until JONAS returns.*)

ANTH. (*poking fire*). It's very cold.

JONAS (*crossing and taking poker from him*). Let the fire

be. Do you want to come to want in your old age that you take to wasting now?

ANTH. There's not time for that, Jonas.

JONAS (*at fireplace*). Not time for what?

ANTH. For me to come to want. I wish there was.

JONAS (*at fireplace*). You always were as selfish an old blade as need be. You wouldn't mind coming to want, wouldn't you? I dare say you wouldn't, and your own flesh and blood might come to want, too, might they, for anything you cared! Oh, you precious old flint!

(*Knock at door in flat. JONAS goes to door and admits BAILEY.*)

BAILEY (*in doorway*). I say, there's a gentleman coming up-stairs as knows you. He seed you coming here and just sent me up to see if you'd see him. Here's his card.

JONAS (*taking card and reading*). Tigg Montague, Esq. Who's he?

Enter TIGG, dressed extravagantly. Eye-glass, etc.

TIGG (R. C.). Behold him here, life size, warranted original. (*Strikes attitude, puts glass in eye, crosses to JONAS and seizes his hand.*) Ah, my dear fellow! Quite well? Here you (*to BAILEY*) what-is-it! Here's a shilling for you. Vanish, quick! Presto! Cut!

BAILEY (*up c., taking shilling*). You make yourself at home, you do!

TIGG (*up R. C.*). Get out!

BAILEY. Out I goes, as the wind said to the bellers. Variety! [*Exit by door in flat.*]

TIGG. Sharp boy that. (*Seizes JONAS' hand.*) Well, how are you?

JONAS (*withdrawing his hand*). Why, I've no money to lend, if that's what you want; though it seems you've dropped somebody in for it. (*Looks at TIGG's dress.*) Well, there are some soft chaps in the world, anyhow.

TIGG (*going down R. C.*). A long lane that has no turning, Chuzzlewit. I have met with a few speculative spirits, Chuzzlewit, and am on the high road to fortune. Hark ye! What do you think of "The Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company"? What do you think of that, eh?

Paid up capital a figure two, and as many aughts after it as the printer can get into the same line.

JONAS (*sitting L. of table*). I know all about paid up capital.

TIGG (*presenting JONAS a prospectus*). Here's a prospectus. Tigg Montague, Esq., Chairman. (*Sits R. of table.*)

JONAS. Well, what do you want with me?

TIGG. See my card. I'm living in Pall Mall. Give me a call; come and dine. (*Leans toward JONAS, confidentially.*) I want you to join us; sprinkle a little capital, and reap a rich harvest of profit.

JONAS. You don't mean to say it's a speculation of *yours*?

TIGG (*sitting back*). Of mine and some other fellows of equal genius. (*Rises.*) Proof of success, vide appearance.

(*Strikes attitude.*)

JONAS. I see, I see; it's a swindle.

TIGG (*sitting R. of table again*). Some people won't see the distinction between peculation and speculation. It's a spec. Join us. Wealth, immense wealth must necessarily pass through our hands. The affair is magnificently started—offices, branch offices, secretaries, vehicles, servants, furniture, prospectuses, agents, clerks, green and red ledgers, court guides, directories, day-books, letter-boxes, iron safes—everything ready and in full play. We have but to watch how things are working and —

JONAS. Oh, I'm not going to run into any danger and lose what I've got and what I shall have when father dies.

TIGG. Lose, impossible! (*Rises.*) Well, at any rate you'll give me a call. No danger in that.

JONAS (*rising*). I don't mind calling; you've got some wine, I suppose.

TIGG (R. C.). Wine! pipes, rivers.

JONAS (L. C.). But mind, I don't bind myself to anything. Let us understand that.

TIGG. Bind, nonsense! Wait till you see it. (*Crosses to JONAS and slaps him on back.*) I applaud your caution, old friend. Well, I shall expect to see you.

(*Goes toward door in flat.*)

Enter BAILEY.

BAILEY (*up c.*). I say, sir; that boy as you give your

horse to, to hold, is letting it out at a penny a ride to all the coves in the neighborhood, and they ain't giving it a sweating at all neither. Oh, no!

TIGG (*up L. C.*). The devil they are! Say, I want a smart lad. Do you know of one, Wrinklenose?

BAILEY. Oh, I ain't just the chap neither. Oh, no, not at all. Hire me. I'm to let, sir.

TIGG. Call on me. (*Gives BAILEY card.*) Pall Mall. Good-bye, Chuzzlewit, I shall expect you. Now, Wrinklenose, show the way.

BAILEY. This way, sir.

(*Touches his cap and goes, followed by TIGG. JONAS crosses to door, R.*)

JONAS (*at door, R.*). Now, gals! (*Enter CHAR. and MER., from R. JONAS goes to chair R. of table and pulls it out for CHAR. to sit. MER. crosses to L. of table.*) Bachelor's Hall, you know, cousin. (*To CHAR.*) I say; the other one will be having a laugh at this when she gets home, won't she? Here you sit on the right side of me, and I'll have her upon the left. (*Crosses to chair L. of table.*) Other one, will you sit here?

MER. You're such a fright that I know I shall have no appetite if I sit so near you, but I suppose I must.

(*Sits L. of table.*)

JONAS (*at back of table to CHAR.*). Ain't she lively?

CHAR. (*seated R. of table*). Oh, I really don't know! I'm tired of being asked such ridiculous questions.

JONAS. Where's that sleepy-headed Chuffey got to? (*Goes to door, L. Enter OLD CHUFFEY, from L. He goes down to chair above fireplace.*) Now, stupid. (*CHUF. pauses by chair.*) Oh, you know your name, do you? (*Crossing to L. C.*) Our clerk, old Chuffey.

MER. Is he deaf, poor fellow?

JONAS. No. I don't know that he is. He ain't deaf, is he, father?

ANTH. I never heard him say he was.

CHAR. Blind?

JONAS. N-no. I never understood that he was at all blind. You don't consider him blind, do you, father?

ANTH. Certainly not.

MER. What is he then?

JONAS (*to back of table, apart to the young ladies*). Why, I'll tell you what he is. He's precious old for one thing; and I ain't best pleased with him for that, for I think my father must have caught it of him. He's been addling his old brains with figures and bookkeeping all his life, so he's a strange old chap and don't understand any one hardly but *him*. (*Points to ANTH.*) Now, cousin (*to CHAR.*), you make the tea just as if you were mistress here. (*CHAR. simpers, but does as he asks, and he chucks her under the chin. MER. passes tea to ANTH. and CHUF.*) I say, did you think I was lost that I didn't come to see you before?

CHAR. I didn't think at all about it.

JONAS. Didn't you though! Did the other one?

(*Indicates MER., who is giving tea to CHUF.*)

CHAR. She never said anything about it one way or the other.

JONAS. Didn't she laugh about it?

CHAR. No, she didn't even laugh about it.

JONAS. She's a terrible one to laugh, ain't she?

CHAR. She is very lively.

JONAS. Liveliness is a pleasant thing—when it don't lead to spending money. Ain't it?

CHAR. (*looking down demurely*). Very much so indeed.

JONAS. Such liveliness as yours, I mean, you know. (*Nudges her with his elbow. MER. comes back to table, sits, drinks tea.*) Aha! There you are, are you?

MER. Yes, fright, here I am. And I would much rather be anywhere else, I assure you.

JONAS. You don't mean that. You can't, you know; it isn't possible.

MER. You can have what opinion you like, fright. I am content to keep mine; and mine is that you are a very unpleasant, odious person. (*Laughs very much.*)

JONAS. Oh, you're a sharp gal! She's a regular teaser, ain't she, cousin? (*Aside.*) I'll make her pay for this.

(*Knock. JONAS rises, goes to door in flat and admits PECK.*)

PECK. Ah, my beloved children, I rejoice to see you in affectionate intercourse with relatives. Man is but grass and soon converted into the hay of declining life. Then why——

JONAS. There, we don't want any sermons now, you know.

(*Goes over to ANTH., who is asleep and shakes him.*) Hello, father! Here's Pecksniff! He gets more addlepatented every day he lives. (*Shakes him again.*) Don't I tell you Pecksniff's here, stupid head?

ANTH. (*starting out of his sleep and poking the fire.*) Ah, Pecksniff—eh? Pecksniff! Yes, yes; I wanted to see Pecksniff.

JONAS (*arresting his father's hand*). Let the fire be, can't you? You extravagant old fool!

CHUF. Ah, your own son! Mr. Chuzzlewit, your own son!

JONAS. There, father's awake now. He wants to speak to you, Pecksniff, on particular business. (*Takes chair from up back and places it near ANTH. Crosses to MER., who rises.*) I say, gals, let's leave the old uns together. Come up-stairs and I'll show you over the house—eh, merry one? (*Puts his arm about MER.'s waist.*) How should you like to be mistress of this house, eh?

MER. Oh, you horrid fright, don't talk like that.

(*Pushes him away and goes up l. JONAS looks gloweringly at her and then crosses to CHAR., who has risen.*)

CHAR. (*declining JONAS' arm*). Thank ye, I can walk by myself.

JONAS. Oh, very well, shan't ask twice. Here, merry one, you're the one for me.

(*Goes up, puts arm about MER., and goes out r. with her; CHAR. following in a huff.*)

PECK. And now, my dear sir, that we are alone—I say alone, because I believe that our dear friend, Mr. Chuffey, is, metaphysically speaking—shall I say—a dummy?

ANTH. (*suddenly*). Jonas is sweet upon your daughter, Pecksniff.

PECK. A charming girl, sir, though I say it who should not say it.

ANTH. You lie. What, you will be a hypocrite, will you?

PECK. My good sir!

ANTH. Don't call me good sir, and don't pretend to be one yourself. If your daughter was what you would have me believe, she wouldn't do for my son. Being what I think she is, thrifty and selfish, I think she will. (*Rises and crosses back of table to R. C.*) I don't want my substance, my savings,

wasted when I am dead. (*Draws his breath heavily, leans on back of chair R. of table. After a pause, sits heavily.*) Pecksniff, that time is not very far distant. It's here, here!

PECK. (*rising, L. C.*). My dear Mr. Chuzzlewit, these are unwholesome fancies. (*ANTH. shakes his head.*) The truth is, my dear sir, you are not well.

(*Crosses sympathetically to back of table.*)

ANTH. Not dying yet, not yet! Look at him. (*Points to CHUF.*) Death has no right to leave him standing and mow me down.

PECK. Undoubtedly not, no right whatever. (*Sits L. of table.*) It's Mr. Chuffey's duty to die first.

ANTH. Listen. (*Beckons PECK.; they lean toward each other.*) Jonas will be my heir; Jonas will be rich. A great catch for you—you know that. You've promised with your daughter a certain sum. Give it, but take my advice. Bind Jonas while he is in the mood. Bind him, Pecksniff. You want him, I know. Bah! (*Sits back.*) You man of oil, have I no eyes to see how you have angled with him from the first? That's my advice (*leaning toward PECK.*), follow it! (*Leans back.*) That's done, and—— Ah! I'm weak, weak. Here, here!

(*Lays his hand on his heart and breathes heavily.*)

Enter JONAS, coming down L. of PECK.

JONAS. Well, Pecksniff, how do you get on? What! (*Looks across at his father.*) Father asleep again? He's always at it now.

PECK. (*rising and taking JONAS a little to L.*). Do you know, Mr. Jonas, that I think your father is—don't let me alarm you—breaking.

JONAS (*spitefully*). Is he? You don't know how tough he is. I do.

PECK. (*looking across at ANTH.*). It strikes me there is an extraordinary change, both in his appearance and manner.

JONAS (*half-starting and alarmed*). What do you mean by extraordinary, if he is changed? There's nothing remarkable in that, is there?

(*ANTH. groans heavily, rises from his chair, looks around wildly, and falls forward on the floor.*)

CHUF. (*starting up and crossing to ANTH.*). Look here, look here!—something wrong. Mr. Chuzzlewit! (*Kneels down by ANTH.*) My poor old master! Mr. Chuzzlewit! Mr. Chuzzlewit!

PECK. (*starting forward*). Send for a doctor!

JONAS (*seizing PECK. by the arm and drawing him to L.*). Don't—don't leave me, Pecksniff. It's lucky you were present. Some one might have said it was my doing.

PECK. (*looking at him in surprise*). Your doing?

JONAS. I used to joke, you know, but I—I never wished him dead. I know how people will talk—just as if he wasn't old, or I could keep him alive. (*Sees ANTH. rising from the floor, CHUF. assisting him.*) Look—look! (*Shrinks behind PECK.*) He's rising up! He wants to speak! Don't let him—it will be the worse for him!

(*JONAS stares in fright past PECK. ANTH. gazes vacantly and wildly around, until his eyes rest on JONAS. He makes a violent effort to speak; points at him, struggles and falls. JONAS recoils. CHUF. bends over the body.*)

CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE I.—*A year later. Garden at PECK.'S. Table, C. Chairs, R. and L. of it. Garden seat, L. Set house at R.*

(PECK. and CHAR. finishing breakfast at table. He is frowning; her nose is red and her mouth is screwed up in a hostile manner.)

PECK. (*seated L. of table*). Cherry, what is amiss between us? My child, why are we disunited?

CHAR. Bother, pa!

PECK. (*in a tone of anguish*). Bother!

CHAR. Oh! It's too late to talk to me like that. I know what it means, and what its value is.

PECK. This is hard! This is very hard! She is my child! I carried her in my arms when she wore shapeless worsted shoes—I might say mufflers—many years ago!

CHAR. (*spitefully*). You needn't taunt me with that, pa. I am not so *many* years older than my sister, either, though she is married to your friend!

PECK. Ah, human nature, human nature! To think that this discord should arise from such a cause! Oh, dear, oh, dear!

CHAR. From such a cause, indeed! State the real cause, pa, or I'll state it myself.

PECK. You will! You have. You did yesterday, you do always. You have no decency; you make no secret of your temper; you have exposed yourself to Mr. Chuzzlewit a hundred times.

CHAR. Myself! Oh, indeed, I don't mind that.

PECK. Me, too, then. (CHAR. *laughs scornfully*.) And since we have come to an explanation, miss, let me tell that I won't allow it. None of your nonsense, miss! I won't permit it to be done.

CHAR. (*rocking her chair backward and forward, and raising her voice to a high pitch*). I shall do, pa, what I please. I'm not going to be crushed in everything. I've been more shamefully used than anybody ever was in this world (*crying and sobbing*), and may expect the worst treatment from you, I know. But I don't care for that; no, I don't!

PECK. (*desperate at her loud tone, rising, looking all about him, crossing back of table and shaking her. She is much surprised*). I'll do it again! How do you mean about being shamefully used? If Mr. Jonas chose your sister in preference to you, who could help it, I should wish to know. What have I to do with it?

CHAR. Wasn't I made a convenience of? Weren't my feelings trifled with? Didn't he address himself to me first? (*Wrings her hands.*) And, oh, good gracious, that I should live to be shook!

PECK. (*standing back of her chair*). You'll live to be shaken again, if you drive me to that means of maintaining decorum under my humble roof. I wonder that you haven't more spirit. (*Crosses L. c.*) If Mr. Jonas didn't care for you, how could you wish to have him?

CHAR. (*indignantly*). I wish to have him! I wish to have him, pa!

PECK. (*L. of table*). Then what are you making all this fuss for?

CHAR. Because I was treated with duplicity, and because my own sister and my own father conspired against me. I am not angry with her. I pity her. I'm sorry for her. I know the fate that's in store for her with that wretch——

PECK. Mr. Jonas will survive your calling him a wretch, my child, I dare say, but call him what you like and make an end of it.

CHAR. (*rising*). Not an end, pa. That's not the only point on which we're not agreed. I won't submit to it. It's better that you should know that at once. I'm not blind and I must ask you to provide me with another home. Place me somewhere, on an independent footing, for I will not submit to having a stepmother at my age. (*Goes up R.*)

PECK. (*L. of table*). Well, I have ever sacrificed my children's happiness to my own—I mean my own happiness to my children's, and I will not begin to regulate my life by other rules of conduct now. If you can be happier elsewhere than in your father's house, my dear, go. Do not think of me, my girl. I shall get on pretty well, no doubt. Wherever you may go you will have my blessing. (*Looks R.*) But here comes Mr. Chuzzlewit. Leave us alone, my child. (*CHAR. exits R., above house, weeping. Enter R., from house, OLD M., very feeble, leaning on cane. PECK. goes to meet OLD M.*) Well, my good sir, and how is my good friend this delicious morning?

OLD M. (R.). Do you mean me?

PECK. (R. C.). Ah! one of his deaf days, I see. (*Goes to OLD M. and leads him to chair R. of table.*) Could I mean any one else, my dear sir?

OLD M. (*sitting R. of table*). You might have meant Mary.

PECK. (R. C.). Indeed I might. Quite true. I might speak of her as a dear friend, I hope?

OLD M. I hope so. I think she deserves it.

PECK. Think! Think! Mr. Chuzzlewit!

OLD M. You are speaking, I know, but I don't catch what you say.

PECK. (*aside*). He's getting deafer than a flint. (*Aloud.*) I was saying, my dear sir, that I am afraid I must make up my mind to part with Cherry.

OLD M. What has *she* been doing?

PECK. (*aside*). He puts the most ridiculous questions I ever heard! He's a child to-day. (*Aloud.*) She hasn't been doing anything, my dear friend.

OLD M. Then what are you going to part with her for?

PECK. She hasn't her health by any means. She misses her sister, my dear sir; they doted on each other from the cradle, and I think of giving her a run to London for a change. A good long run, sir, if I feel she likes it.

OLD M. Quite right. It's judicious.

PECK. I am glad to hear you say so. I hope you mean to bear me company in this dull part while she is away.

OLD M. I have no intention of removing from it.

PECK. Then why, my good sir, can't you come and stay with me? Such a place as the Dragon, however well conducted, is hardly a home for Miss Graham.

OLD M. No, you are quite right, it is not.

PECK. Then why not bring Miss Graham here, sir? Our lovely friend shall occupy my daughter's room; you shall choose your own—we shall not quarrel, I hope.

OLD M. We are not likely to do that.

PECK. (*pressing his hand*). We understand each other, my dear sir, I see! (*Aside.*) I can wind him 'round my little finger. (*Crosses to L. C., back of table.*)

OLD M. You leave the recompense to me?

PECK. (L. C.). Oh, do not speak of recompense.

OLD M. I wish to pay as I go, even when I buy of you; not that I do not leave a balance to be settled one day, Pecksniff.

PECK. May that day be far distant. (*Pulls out handker-*

chief and wipes his eyes.) Ah! sir, if I could say how deep an interest I have in you and yours! I allude to our beautiful young friend —

OLD M. You mean Mary?

PECK. Yes, if her position could be altered or defined, sir!

OLD M. Should I make her a seamstress or a governess?

PECK. Heaven forbid, my dear sir; there are other ways, there are indeed, but I am much excited and embarrassed, and my feelings will not consent to be entirely smothered like the young children in the Tower. They are grown up, and the more I press the bolster on them the more they look around the corner of it. I—I—would rather not pursue the subject. I will resume it at some other time—bless you!

(Apparently overcome, goes L.)

OLD M. *(rising and going up to gate).* Your good intentions have unnerved you; a little walk will do you good! Will you accompany me back to the Dragon?

PECK. *(going up quickly to OLD M.).* With pleasure.

[They exeunt through gate to L.]

Enter TOM, from house.

TOM *(crossing and putting table to rights).* No news from America, from young Mr. Martin. Poor Mary will break her heart. Poor Mary! She loves him dearly! And to be loved by her he ought to be a happy fellow. *(Sighs.)* Ah! had I been like him—handsome, talented and amiable, I might have known the blessing of being loved by one like her. Like her? No, no; there is no other in the world like her—not one.

Enter MARY GRAHAM, agitated and hastily, from R., through gate.

MARY *(coming down R. C.).* Ah, Mr. Pinch, I'm glad I found you. Why, there are tears in your eyes.

TOM *(at back of table).* Eh? Bless me! *(Wipes his eyes.)* So there are. I was thinking of poor Martin. *(MARY turns away, R.)* Now don't start and look so pale, Miss Mary, pray don't. *(Goes to her.)* Bless me! there's something the matter. *(Leads her to chair R. of table.)* I'm sure there is, so don't deceive me! You are alarmed!

MARY *(sitting R. of table).* Mr. Pinch, I have hitherto

hesitated to confide in you, though Martin desired me to do so. Oh, Mr. Pinch, I am really very wretched !

(Places handkerchief to her eyes.)

Enter PECK., at back, from L. Seeing them, he softly enters gate and steals behind tree or bush up L. and listens.

TOM (R. C.). Dear, dear ! What is the matter, Miss Mary ? Trust me, do. I'm a poor, shy, awkward creature, and you should think no more of me, bless you, than if I were a toasting fork, or a frying-pan ; but anything I can do I will.

MARY. Dear Mr. Pinch, I cannot tell you how your kindness moves me ! One reason that I did not consult you is that you are an unflinching advocate of poor Martin's greatest enemy, Mr. Pecksniff. *(PECK. dodges down behind the bush.)* Mr. Pinch, you are mistaken in him. That person whom you think is the best of men is the worst, the falsest, most shameless !

TOM. Mercy on us ! Good gracious ! What has he done ?

MARY. What is he, who, knowing how defenseless and alone I am, persecutes and affronts me with his loathsome advances ?

TOM. Whoever he may be he is a scoundrel. But pray don't say it's Pecksniff ! Don't, Miss Mary, don't.

MARY. What is he, who, now that my only friend has sunk into the helplessness of declining age, can use the influence he has basely gained for every despicable and wicked purpose ?

TOM. I say he is a scoundrel !

(Crosses to L. C. PECK. rises.)

MARY. What is he, who, thinking he could compass these designs the better were I his wife, assails me with a coward's argument, that if I marry him, Martin, on whom I have brought so much misfortune, shall be restored to something of his former hopes with his grandfather, and if I do not, he shall be plunged into deeper ruin ?

(PECK., who has been listening, plunges down again.)

TOM (L. C.). I say he is a scoundrel, a double-dyed villain ! Is—*(leaning toward MARY)* is it Pecksniff ?

MARY. Alas, Mr. Pinch, it is. *(Weeps bitterly.)*

TOM (*crossing to back of MARY'S chair*). Don't weep—don't weep. I'll protect you; aye, even from Pecksniff himself. To think I have been so deceived in him! To think that he—he should be such a villain! Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Don't cry; now, don't. (*Turns away wiping his eyes.*)

MARY (*rising*). I cannot talk more to you now. I will see you presently. I know you will befriend me, Mr. Pinch. Pardon me; pray pardon me now.

(*Goes up c. to gate followed by TOM. MARY exits hastily to R.*)

TOM (*up c.*). Befriend you? Indeed I will. I wouldn't have cared for anything he had done to me; but her—her! He's a villain, a scoundrel, an iniquitous alligator, a rascal, a—— Oh, oh, oh! I'll not stay in his house.

[*Exit into house in an overpowering passion.*]

(PECK. *rises coolly; adjusts his hair and dress.*)

PECK. Very good, very good; Mr. Pinch, you shall not stay. (*Comes down L. c.*) I'll discharge a duty to society and you at once. And she, too. But no matter, I have the imbecile old man under my control, and with the blessing of Providence, I will take a bitter revenge on them all! Very good! (*Walks to R. and returns.*) Very good!

Enter OLD M. from L., through gate.

OLD M. (*coming down L. c.*). What is the matter, Pecksniff?

PECK. (*crossing to OLD M.*). My good, my worthy friend, I am deceived.

OLD M. Deceived?

PECK. In the tenderest point, beloved friend, by Thomas Pinch. In a matter that concerns you.

OLD M. Oh, bad, bad; are you certain?

PECK. My eyes and my ears are witnesses. If a fiery serpent had proclaimed it from the top of Salisbury Cathedral, I would have cast the falsehood back into the—er—serpent's teeth, such was my faith in Thomas Pinch. But I am not a serpent myself, sir, I grieve to say, and no hope is left me.

OLD M. On what subject has he deceived you?

PECK. That is the worst of it. It concerns you. But you shall be righted. (*Going to back of table, calls.*) Jane! Jane!

(JANE enters from house.) Be kind enough to send Mr. Pinch here if you please, and have his box packed and ready for removal. (*Crosses to R. C. JANE exits to house.*)

Enter MARY from R. through gate; greatly agitated.

MARY (*coming down L. C. to OLD M.*). Oh, my dear sir! He—he is there at the gate. Oh, pray, sir, receive him kindly!

OLD M. (*L. of MARY*). Who—who?

PECK. Who, my child?

MARY. Martin, your grandson, Martin.

PECK. (*starting up and calling*). Lock the gate. Admit no one.

(Goes up toward gate, stops up L. C. as MAR. enters.)

Enter MAR. suddenly; he advances down L. C. MARY steps back, L.

MAR. Grandfather—dear grandfather!

(He advances; PECK. stops him.)

PECK. No, young man, no, sir, none of that! If you must strike, strike here, sir, here! Launch your arrows at me, sir, if you will have the goodness, not at him.

MAR. (*C.*). Hear me, I implore you, sir! Let me but speak to you!

(MARY comes down L. of OLD M., taking his arm imploringly.)

PECK. (*dodging about to keep between them*). Would you, sir, would you? Would you strike at venerable virtue? Know that it is not defenseless. I—I will be its shield, young man, assail me! Come on, sir, fire away!

OLD M. (*L., aside*). How fresh and full the hopes of days long past return again! (*Aloud.*) Pecksniff, stand aside, and let me see him I used to love so dearly.

PECK. (*L. C.*). There, beloved sir! Behold the monster who but for me would do you a mortal injury!

(Stands aside.)

OLD M. And that is he. (*Aside.*) Changed! (*With a heavy sigh.*) Say what you wish to say, but come no nearer.

MAR. (*C.*). Sir, from a painful journey, from a hard life, from privation and distress, gloom and disappointment, sickness and despair, I have returned to you.

PECK. Of course! Vagabonds generally do.

MAR. But for a faithful friend I must have died in a foreign land. Yet think not I have been driven here wholly by want—that affection and regret have had no share in this. When I parted from you, grandfather, I deserved that suspicion; I do not now. (*With a sigh.*) Let the voice of nature and association plead between us. Do not, for one fault, however thankless, quite reject me. I am now changed, sir, changed by dire experience and calamity.

(OLD M., *overcome by the appeal, sinks on to seat, L., and buries his face in his hands.* MARY *stands back of him.*)

PECK. My dear sir, you must not give way to this. You must not allow this fellow's shameless conduct to move you so. Rouse yourself. Think of me, my friend.

OLD M. (*looking up sternly*). I will. You recall me to myself. I will think of you.

PECK. Shall I give expression to your thoughts, my friend?

(*Wipes his eyes.*)

OLD M. Yes, speak for me. Thank you!

PECK. Young man, blush if you can; begone without a blush if you can't! You shall not wrong the revered gentleman, sir, whilst I have life! You must strike at him through me. Aye, sir, through me. And in such a cause you will find me, my young sir, an ugly customer!

MAR. (*to OLD M., heedless of PECK.*). Will you give me no answer, sir; not a word?

OLD M. You hear what has been said by my best friend?

MAR. I only hear what you say to me, sir.

OLD M. (*to PECK.*). You have nothing more to say, nothing more to urge? Remember, Pecksniff, I will oppose nothing that you ask of me.

PECK. (L. C.). Oh, oh, this kindness! It's too much! Let me—oh, let me kiss your beloved hand! No, no, I have nothing further to say.

OLD M. (*to MAR.*). You have heard him. It is all over. Go, sir, go!

PECK. Yes, go, viper! Rattlesnake, go!

(MAR. *goes up to gate.*)

MARY (*rushing to MAR. up C.*). Oh, Martin!

MAR. My dear girl, he has not changed you? I have still one blessing left?

MARY. Changed, Martin! Oh, never! Do not fear; I will remain true to him and you, Martin, till the last; and should he awaken from his delusion, even at the point of death, I am here, love, to recall you to his thoughts.

MAR. My dear, dear girl!

MARY. Farewell, Martin.

MAR. Farewell, Mary! Dear girl, I will deserve you yet!

(MAR. *exits to R., through gate.* MARY *exits, weeping, to house.*)

PECK. And now, dear friend, I have a duty to discharge which I owe to society, and that duty I shall discharge at any cost, at any cost. (*Sits L. of table. A pause.*)

Enter TOM from house. He pauses, R. PECK. looks sternly at him. A pause.

OLD M. Pecksniff, what does this mean?

PECK. My good sir, I am about to discharge a duty I owe to society. (*Rises, facing TOM.*) Mr. Pinch, just now whilst sitting in that room (*pointing to the house*) the heat of the day, and the fatigue from a ramble I had taken, overcame me, and I fell asleep. I was awakened by the sound of voices—one was that of a lady—can you guess whose the other? Oh! Mr. Pinch, Mr. Pinch, I wonder you can look me in the face.

(*Takes out money from pocket.*)

TOM (R.). I have nothing to be ashamed of, sir.

PECK. (C.). Then you have a hardened conscience, Mr. Pinch. But I will not dismiss you without a word of explanation. From fragments of that conversation of which I was unwittingly the listener, I ascertained that you, forgetful of all ties of duty and of honor, presumed to address Miss Graham with unreturned professions of attachment and proposals of love. (*TOM starts, looks at PECK., who evades his look.*) Do you deny it?

TOM (*after a pause*). Deny it? I deny nothing—and admit nothing. I have nothing to say.

PECK. Nothing to say! (*To OLD M.*) You hear, sir? (*Hands money to TOM.*) Then oblige me by counting that, the

exact sum due to you to this day, I believe. One pound, two shillings, and four-pence. "You find it correct?"

TOM (*mechanically counting*). Quite correct, sir.

PECK. You have the keys of the church, I think?

TOM (*sadly*). Yes, sir.

PECK. Oblige me with them, if you please. (TOM *takes the keys from his pocket and looks at them intently.*) Put them down on the table, please. (TOM *slowly puts them down on table.* PECK. *removes table to L.*) I—I have requested Jane to pack and cord your trunk, and there is a person in the kitchen who will take your luggage wherever you please. We part, Mr. Pinch, at once, and are strangers from this time. (JANE *enters from house, carrying TOM'S overcoat, small carpet-bag and hat.* TOM *takes them and shakes her by the hand.* JANE *runs back into the house and returns with an old fiddle and bow, which she takes to TOM.* He *puts them under his arm and goes toward gate.* PECK., L. C.) I will not say how much this tries me. I have been nourishing in my breast an ostrich and not a human pupil. I can only hope that this deception will not impair my freshness or contract—my—pinions. I hope not. (*Crosses to steps of house.*) I shall endeavor not to think the worse of my fellow creatures for what has passed between us. Farewell.

(*He puts his handkerchief to his eyes; TOM pauses in the gateway and turns and looks at him. OLD M. rises, makes a sudden step toward TOM, then checks himself. PECK. strikes an attitude, with his hand in his waistcoat. JANE wipes her eyes with her apron.*)

CURTAIN

SCENE 2.—*The Inn in Holborn. A garret room. Fireplace down R. Door, R., above fireplace. Door, L., 1st entrance. Window, C., in flat. Table, R. C., in front of fireplace. Chair L. of table. Another chair, L. Rocking-chair in front of fireplace. An old bureau, L. Candles lighted on mantel and table.*

(BETSY PRIG *is sitting in armchair in front of fireplace sipping from glass. MR. MOULD is standing looking out of window, his hands behind him. There is the sound of gentle hammering at back.*)

MOULD. Quite the buzz of insects. It puts one in mind of the sound of animated nature in the agricultural districts. It's exactly like the woodpecker tapping.

BETSY. The woodpecker tapping the hollow elm tree.

MOULD. Ha, ha! Not at all bad, Mrs. Prig. We shall be glad to hear from you again, Mrs. Prig. Hollow elm tree, eh? Ha, ha! Very good indeed. I've seen worse than that in the Sunday papers, Mrs. Prig.

(*Knock at door, L.*)

BETSY. That's Gamp; I know by the wheezing she makes. Come in, Sairy. (*Enter SARAH GAMP. She has a large bundle, pair of pattens, large folded blue umbrella. She stops just inside the door on seeing MOULD.*) I began to think you wa'n't a-comin'!

SARAH. It shall be made good to-morrer night, honorable. I had to go and fetch my things.

MOULD. Now, Mrs. Gamp, what's *your* news?

SARAH (*curtseying*). There are some 'appy creeters as time runs back'ards with, and you are one, Mr. Mould. I says to Mrs. 'Arris, only t'other day, the last Monday evenin' fortnight as ever dawned on this Pilgian's Projiss of a mortal wale; I says to Mrs. 'Arris when she says to me, "Years and our trials, Mrs. Gamp, sets marks upon us all," "Say not the words, Mrs. 'Arris, if you and me is to continual friends, for sech is not the case. Mr. Mould," I says, making so free, I will confess, to use the name (*curtseying*), "is one of them as goes agen the obserwation straight; and never, Mrs. 'Arris, whilst I've a drop of breath to draw, will I set by, and not stand up, don't think it." "I ast your pardon, ma'am," says Mrs. 'Arris, "and I humbly grant your grace, for if ever a woman lived as would see her feller creeters into fits to serve her friends, well do I know that woman's name is Sairy Gamp."

MOULD. Mrs. Gamp can drink a glass of something warm, I dare say. Sit down, Mrs. Gamp, sit down.

(*SARAH sits in chair near door, raises her eyes to ceiling and pretends to be unconscious of the fact that BETSY is mixing her a glass of spirits. BETSY hands it to her, much to SARAH'S surprise, and returns to her seat by fire.*)

SARAH. A thing as hardly ever, Mr. Mould, occurs with me unless it is when I am indisposed, and find my 'alf-a-pint of porter settling 'eavy on my chest. Mrs. 'Arris often and

often says to me, "Sairy Gamp," she says, "you raily do amaze me!" "Mrs. 'Arris," I says to her, "why so? Give it a name, I beg." "Tellin' the truth then, ma'am," says Mrs. 'Arris, "and shamin' him as shall be nameless betwixt you and me, never did I think till I knowed you as any woman could sick-nuss on the little that you take to drink." The best of lucks to all.

(SARAH *drinks rapidly, then wipes her lips upon her shawl and takes a bit of cracker from her pocket and nibbles it.*)

MOULD. And what's your news, Mrs. Gamp?

SARAH. Mr. Chuffey, sir, is jest as usual; he ain't no better, and he ain't no wuss. I take it very kind of Mr. Jonas to have wrote up to you, and said, "Let Mrs. Gamp take care of 'im till I come 'ome"; but ev'rythink he does *is* kind. There ain't many like 'im. If there was, we wouldn't want no churches. Now 'ere's this gent been took sick, 'ere at this inn at 'Olborn, and is sick abed. Mrs. Prig is day nuss, but she is otherwise engaged at night, and they is consequently in want of night-watching. "Now," I says to myself, "bein' in a light place, where I am, and this job promisin' well, why not unite the two?"

MOULD (*rubbing his chin*). Night-watching, eh?

SARAH. From eight till eight, sir. I'll not deceive you.

MOULD. And then go back, eh?

SARAH. Quite free, sir, to attend to Mr. Chuffey. His ways bein' quiet, and his hours early, he'd be abed, sir, nearly all the time. I will not deny (*with meekness*) that I am but a poor woman, and that the money is a objick, but do not let that act upon you, Mr. Mould! Rich folks may ride on camels, but it ain't so easy for 'em to see out of a needle's eye. That is my comfort, and I 'ope I knows it.

MOULD. Well, Mrs. Gamp, I don't see any particular objection to your earning an honest penny under such circumstances. I should keep it quiet, I think, Mrs. Gamp; I wouldn't mention it to Mr. Chuzzlewit on his return, for instance, unless it were necessary, or he asked you pointblank. (*Knock at door, L. SARAH rises and retires up back.*) Come in.

Enter MAR.

MAR. Is the patient better?

MOULD. Worse!

BETSY. Much wuss! Oh! a deal badder!

MAR. Poor fellow! I'm sorry to hear it. The worst of it is that I've no idea what friends or relations he has, or where they live, except that it's certainly not in London.

BETSY. Well! Of all the many wague directions I've ever seen or 'eard of that's the waviest.

MAR. The fact is, as I told you yesterday when you sent to me, I really know very little about him. We were school-fellows together, but since that time I've only met him twice. The letter bearing my name and address, which you found upon his table, and which led to your applying to me, is in answer, you will observe, to one he wrote from this house the very day he was taken ill, making an appointment with him at his request. Here is his letter if you wish to see it. (*Hands letter to MOULD, who reads it.* MAR. *addresses* BETSY.) Has he any luggage?

BETSY. Nuthin' but a portmanteau, and werry little in it.

MAR. A few pounds in his purse, though?

BETSY (*hesitating*). Yes. I give it to the landlord and he sealed it up. I made a memorandum of the amount which you're welcome to see.

MAR. (*to* MOULD). Have you anything to suggest?

MOULD. N-no, except ——

MAR. Except who's to pay, I suppose.

MOULD. Why, it would be as well.

BETSY. Quite as well.

MAR. It is but reasonable, I fully admit. At all events, you have the stock in hand to go upon for the present, and I will readily undertake to see that you (*addressing* MOULD) and the nurses are paid.

SARAH (*coming forward*). Ah! A rayal gentleman! (*They all turn and look at her.*) The night nuss (*curtseying*) from Kingsgate Street, well bekknown to Mrs. Prig, the day nuss, and the best of creeters! If the poor dear gentleman ain't no better yet, still that is what must be expected and prepared for. It ain't the fust time by many a score (*curtseying*) that Mrs. Prig and me has nussed together, turn and turn about, one off, one on. We knows each other's ways, and often gives relief when others fail. Our charges is but low, sir, considerin' the natur of our painful duty.

MAR. Well, I'll look in in the morning.

MOULD. I'll go along with you, sir. (*To* SARAH.) Be sure he has his draughts regularly.

SARAH. Oh, surely, sir, you can trust to Sairy Gamp.
(*Curtseys. Exeunt, MAR. and MOULD, L. SARAH to BETSY.*)
And how is he? (*Nods toward door, R.*)

BETSY. Oh, he's quiet, but his wits is gone. It ain't no matter what you say.

SARAH. Anythin' to tell before you goes, my dear?

(*Puts her bundle down beside the door and looks affectionately at BETSY.*)

BETSY. The pickled salmon is quite delicious, I can partic'lar recommend it. Don't have nothin' to say to the cold meat, for it tastes of the stable. The drinks is all good.

SARAH (*expressing herself much gratified*). Ah!

BETSY. The physic and them things is on the mankelsheff. He took his last slime draught at seven. The easy chair ain't soft enough; you'll want his piller.

SARAH. Thank ye, my dear. (*Holds the door, L., open for BETSY, who disappears down the hallway. She closes the door, takes up bundle, goes up and looks out of window.*) A little dull, but not as bad as might be. I'm glad to see a parapidge, in case of fire, and lots of roofs and chimley pots to walk upon. (*Goes to fireplace and sits in easy chair.*) Harder than a brick badge! (*Pursues researches among physic bottles, glasses, jugs and teacups. Takes off bonnet and goes into room, R. Pause. Reënters.*) Ah! he'd make a lovely corpse! (*Lights candle, fills small kettle with water, and sets table with tea things, pulls bell rope, unpacks bundle. Enter MAID.*) I think, young woman, that I could pick a little bit of pickled salmon. I takes new bread, my dear, with just a little pat of fresh butter, and a mossel of cheese. In case there should be sech a thing as a cowcumber in the 'ouse, will you be so kind as bring it, for I'm rather partial to 'em and they does a world of good in a sick room. If they draws the Brighton Tipper 'ere I takes that ale at night, my love, it bein' considered wakeful by the doctors. Look sharp! (*Exit servant. SARAH takes out of bundle a yellow nightcap of prodigious size; takes off row of false curls; puts on nightcap and adjusts it with great care; takes out night jacket and puts it on. Enter servant with supper on tray; SARAH takes it and arranges it on table. Exit servant. SARAH sits down to eat.*) Ah! what a blessed thing it is—living in a wale—to be contented! what a blessed thing it is to make sick people 'appy in their beds, and never mind one's self as long as one can do a service! I don't be-

lieve a finer cowcumber was ever grow'd. I'm sure I never see one! I a'most forgot the piller, I declare! (*Rises.*)

LEWSOME (*in room, R., calling loudly*). Chuzzlewit!

(SARAH *jumps in terror, runs to door, L., looks into hall, goes to window, looks out.*)

SARAH. It seemed to make the werry bottles ring. What could I ha' been a-dreamin' of? (*Goes back to chair and sits down.*) That dratted Chuffey, I'll be bound.

LEW. (*appearing in door, R., in old dressing-gown and night-cap, staring wild-eyed*). Chuzzlewit! Jonas! No!

SARAH (*starting up*). Drat the man! (*Goes to LEW., takes him by the arm, shakes him, and leads him to armchair, L. of table.*) Don't make none of that noise 'ere. (*LEW. sits uneasily, his head rolling back and forth on the chair back. SARAH goes back to table and sits.*) Ah! I thought things was too pleasant to last! The devil's in the night, I think, it's turned so chilly. (*Drinks.*)

LEW. (*wildly*). Don't drink so much! You'll ruin us all. Don't you see how the fountain sinks? Look at the mark where the sparkling water was just now!

SARAH. Sparklin' water, indeed! I'll have a sparklin' cup o' tea, I think. I wish you'd 'old your noise!

LEW. (*laughing wildly, then checking himself, counting intently and fast*). One—two—three—four—five—six.

SARAH. One, two, buckle my shoe. (*Goes down on her knees and blows the fire.*) Three, four, shut the door. I wish you'd shut your mouth, young man. Five, six, pickin' up sticks. If I'd got a few handy, I should have the kettle bilin' all the sooner. (*Busies herself with the fire.*)

LEW. (*after a pause*). That makes five hundred and twenty-one men, dressed all alike, and with the same distortion on their faces, that have passed in at the window, and out at the door. Look there! Five hundred and twenty-two—twenty-three—twenty-four. Do you see them?

SARAH. Ah! I see 'em; all the whole kit of 'em numbered like 'ackney coaches, ain't they?

LEW. Touch me! Let me be sure of this. Touch me!

SARAH. You'll take your next draught when I've made the kettle bile, and you'll be touched then. You'll be touched up, too, if you don't take it quiet.

LEW. Five hundred and twenty-eight, five hundred and twenty-nine, five hundred and thirty — Look here!

SARAH. What's the matter now?

(Rises with kettle and makes tea at table.)

LEW. They're coming four abreast, each man with his arm entwined in the next man's, and his hand upon his shoulder. What's that upon the arm of every man, and on the flag?

SARAH. Spiders, p'raps.

LEW. Crape! Black crape! Good God! Why do they wear it outside?

SARAH. Would you have 'em carry black crape on their insides? 'Old your noise, 'old your noise.

(LEW. quiets down, his head ceases to roll, he sleeps. SARAH pours cup of tea, and is in the act of drinking, when)

CURTAIN DESCENDS

(Pause to represent lapse of hours.)

CURTAIN RISES

(It is morning. SARAH is asleep in rocking-chair. LEW. in chair as before. The tea things are still on table. Candles have burned out. The door, L., is shaken. Pause. Shaken again. SARAH, rousing with a start, goes to door and unbolts it, admitting BETSY.)

SARAH. Good-mornin', Betsy, you're bright and early.

BETSY *(crossing to LEW.)*. And how are we by this time? We looks charmin'.

SARAH. We looks a deal charminer than we are then. We got out of bed back'ards, I think, for we're as cross as two sticks.

LEW. Oh, dear me! Oh, dear, dear!

SARAH. There, that's the way he's been a-conductin' of 'imself, Betsy, ever since he got out of bed, if you'll believe it.

BETSY. Instead of bein' grateful for all our little ways. Oh, fie, for shame, sir, fie, for shame.

(Knock at door. SARAH opens door.)

Enter MAR.

MAR. Good-morning. *(Sees LEW., crosses to him and sits*

down beside him.) Up and dressed. That's brave. How do you feel?

LEW. Much better, but very weak.

MAR. No wonder. You have had a hard bout of it. But country air and change of scene will make another man of you!

LEW. (*seizing MAR. by the sleeve*). Mr. Chuzzlewit! I don't wish to be overheard. I have something very particular and strange to say to you; something that has been a dreadful weight on my mind through this long illness.

MAR. (*turning quickly to SARAH and BETSY*). Would you mind leaving us alone together for a short time? Perhaps I can soothe him if I stay and talk quietly with him for a little.

SARAH. Oh, bless you, no! He hates his nusses to this hour. They always does it, sir. It's a certain sign. If you could have heerd the poor, dear soul a-findin' fault with me and Betsy Prig a while ago, you'd wonder how it is we don't get fretted to the tomb.

(*Curtseys at the door, L., which she holds open while BETSY sails out, followed by SARAH.*)

LEW. (*after the door closes*). Bolt the door.

(*MAR. does so and comes back to his chair by LEW., who sits with his head resting on his hand.*)

MAR. What is it that is disturbing you, my friend?

LEW. (*looking up*). What relation was Mr. Anthony Chuzzlewit, who —

MAR. Who died—to me? He was my grandfather's brother.

LEW. I fear he was made away with—murdered!

MAR. My God! By whom?

LEW. (*looking down*). I fear, by me.

MAR. By you?

LEW. Not by my act, but I fear by my means.

MAR. Speak out! and speak the truth.

LEW. Listen! I have been bred a surgeon, and for the last few years have served a general practitioner in the city as his assistant. While I was in his employment, I became acquainted with Jonas Chuzzlewit.

MAR. What do you mean? Do you know he is the son of the old man of whom you have spoken?

LEW. I do. I have reason to know it; for I have often heard him wish his father dead, and complain of his being

wearisome to him. He was in the habit of doing so at a place of meeting we had; three or four of us, at night. There was no good in the place, you may be sure, when you hear that he was the chief of the party. I wish I had died myself, and never seen it! (*Pause. He rests his head on his hand again. MAR. gazes at him in horror.*) We met to drink and game, not for large sums, but for sums that were large for us. He generally won. Whether or no, he lent money at interest to those who lost; and in this way, though I think we all secretly hated him, he came to be master of us. To propitiate him, we made a jest of his father—it began with his debtors; I was one—and we used to toast a quicker journey to the old man, and a swift inheritance to the young one. (*Pauses as before.*) One night he came there in a very bad humor. He had been greatly tried, he said, by the old man that day. He and I were alone together, and he angrily told me that the old man was in his second childhood; that he was weak, imbecile and driveling, and that it would be a charity to put him out of the way. He swore that he had often thought of mixing something with the stuff he took for his cough, which should help him to die easily. People were sometimes smothered who were bitten by mad dogs, he said; and why not help these lingering old men out of their troubles, too? He looked full at me as he said so, and I looked full at him; but it went no farther that night. (*Pause.*)

MAR. Go on.

LEW. It may have been a week after that when he spoke to me again. We were alone then, too. He was reading a newspaper when I went in, and nodded to me without looking up or leaving off reading. I sat down opposite and close to him. He said, immediately, that he wanted me to get him some of two sorts of drugs. One that was instantaneous in its effect, of which he wanted very little. One that was slow, and not suspicious to appearance, of which he wanted more. While he was speaking to me he still read the newspaper. He said "Drugs," and never used any other word. Neither did I. I asked him what he wanted them for. He said for no harm; to physic cats. What did it matter to me? He could get them without my aid at half a hundred places, but not so easily as he could get them of me. This was true. He might not want them at all, he said, and he had no present idea of using them, but he wished to have them by him. All this time he still read the newspaper. We talked about the price. He was to forgive

me a small debt—I was quite in his power—and to pay me five pounds; and the matter dropped, through others coming in. But next night, under exactly similar circumstances, I gave him the drugs, and he gave me the money. We have never met since. I only know that the poor old father died soon afterward, just as he would have died from this cause, and that I have undergone, and suffer now, intolerable misery. Nothing (*stretching out his hands*) can paint my misery! It is well deserved, but nothing can paint it.

(*Hangs his head and sits utterly crushed.*)

MAR. (*rising in agitation, goes to window, pauses, comes back to LEW. and puts his hand on his shoulder*). Come, man! You are utterly worn out. You must get back to bed. We will talk of this when you are stronger. (*Goes to door, L.*) Mrs. Gamp! (*Enter SARAH and BETSY.*) Mrs. Gamp, I leave the patient in your hands. I will see you again soon. In the meantime see that he has the best of care. Good-morning. [*Exit, L.*]

SARAH (*crossing to LEW.*). I never see sech a man. He wouldn't be washed if he had his own way.

LEW. (*indicating BETSY, weakly*). She puts the soap in my mouth.

BETSY. Couldn't you keep it shut then? Who do you think's to wash one featur', and miss another, and wear one's eyes out with all manner of fine work of that description for 'alf-a-crown a day?

(*During the above, SARAH is getting on her shawl and bonnet.*)

SARAH. I must be gettin' back to old Chuffey. Wishin' you lots of sickness, my darlin' creetur, and good places. After this job is finished, which won't be a long one, I'm thinkin', I hope we may work together again, and may our next job be at a large fambly's where they all takes it reg'lar, one from another, turn and turn about, and has it businesslike. Good-bye, my dear. (*Goes to door, L.*)

BETSY (*holding door open*). I don't care how soon it is, nor how many weeks it lasts. Good-bye. (*Closing door and going to bureau and getting hair brush and coming back to LEW., seizes him by the chin, and begins rasping his head with the brush.*) I suppose you don't like that neither. Ah! I know'd as much.

CURTAIN

ACT IV

SCENE I.—TIGG'S *dressing-room*. *Door in flat. Door, L., above fireplace. Fireplace down L. Window, R. Dressing table and mirror, R., above window. Table, C. Chairs R. and L. of it.*

(TIGG, *in dressing-gown, brushing his hair before mirror.*
Enter BAILEY, *door in flat.*)

BAILEY (*quickly*). He's below, sir.

TIGG. He! Who?

BAILEY. Old indiskiverable, as walks about like a werry old suit of clothes with nothin' in 'em.

TIGG (*quickly*). Nadgett?

BAILEY. Yes, sir.

TIGG. Quick, show him in.

BAILEY. Yes, sir—like winkin'! [*Exit, door in flat.*]

TIGG (*putting hair brush on table and turning to meet MR. NADGETT, who enters quietly, closing the door softly after him*). Well, Mr. Nadgett, did Chuzzlewit get the letter?

NAD. Mr. Pinch gave it to him. He doesn't suspect that I had anything to do with it. Mr. Pinch is my lodger, sir, and happened to be at the wharf, so I asked him to go aboard the boat, and he reached him at the last minute. He was very angry, but came ashore and will be here soon.

TIGG (*sitting L. of table*). Good! Any other news?

NAD. (R. C., *rubbing his hands and smoothing his chin*). Why, sir, I think it's a good case. (*Produces pocketbook.*) I've had some trouble though.

TIGG. No, no. None of your notes. Give me word of mouth.

NAD. (*taking chair from up R. and bringing it down to chair R. of table, and placing his pocketbook in it, sits in chair R. of table, speaking the while*). I never talk; walls have ears. (*Selects paper from pocketbook and hands it to TIGG.*) Number one. Read that.

TIGG (*looking over paper*). Ah—yes. (*Indifferently.*) Suspicions; nothing more.

NAD. Number two. Read that.

TIGG (*looking over paper, rather astonished*). Eh!—indeed!

NAD. (*giving third paper with satisfaction*). Number three. There!

TIGG (*starting on looking at it a moment*). The devil! Nadgett, you are an extraordinary man! A clever hand at a secret!

NAD. (*putting up papers in pocketbook*). Nothing has an interest to me that is not a secret.

TIGG. We've hooked this cunning fish, but we must be wary how we play him; he savors of danger. One thousand we have made secure. We must have another. Pecksniff has plenty of money, plenty! Could he by any means be had? I'll try. (*Knock at street door.*) I think I heard a knock. Will you put your head out of window, and tell me if there is anybody at the door?

(NAD. *goes to window and cautiously peers down into the street, drawing back his head with equal caution, but not altering his voice or manner.*)

NAD. Mr. Jonas Chuzzlewit.

TIGG (*rising*). I thought so. There's a deep impression of the devil's hoof here. (*Gives back paper.*) Take care of that; it will be of use.

Enter BAILEY, door in flat.

BAILEY. Mr. Jonas Chuzzlewit, sir, and as cranky as blazes.

NAD. Shall I go? (*Puts paper hastily in pocketbook.*)

TIGG. No; you'd better stay. Show him in, Bailey. (*Exit*

BAILEY. TIGG *hastily takes off dressing-gown and resumes his toilet, taking up hair brush again.*) No, no. Don't leave us alone together. He's a dangerous man, Nadgett. By the Lord! There's no knowing what might happen when he knows I've proof of—

NAD. Hem!

(*Points toward door and hastens to fireplace, where he stands drying his handkerchief with his back to the room.*)

Enter JONAS, door in flat, very sulky.

TIGG. Ah! My dear Chuzzlewit, you rise with the lark! How are you?

(*Puts out his hand which has the hair brush in it. JONAS shakes it, discovers his mistake, and dashes it on the floor.*)

JONAS. Pshaw! I'm a light sleeper! Better up than lying awake, counting those cursed city clocks striking! (*Sees NAD.*) Who's that? Oh! (*Goes down R. C.*) Old What's-his-name, looking as if he wished to skulk up the chimney!

TIGG (*up c.*). Perhaps he does. (*Picks up brush.*)

JONAS. Well, we don't want him, do we? (*TIGG comes toward him.*) He's rather afraid of me, I think.

TIGG (*looking furtively at JONAS, and brushing his whiskers*). Do you know, it's my belief that you are poison to him.

JONAS (*starting*). Poison!

TIGG. Hullo, Jonas! What's the matter with your lips? (*Starts back in alarm.*) Where the deuce is the towel? (*NAD. quickly brings towel from chair by fireplace, and hands it to*

JONAS. *Slight pause and NAD. returns to fireplace.* TIGG, *up c.*) Anything the matter, eh?

JONAS (*passionately, throwing towel on the floor*). No! Say what you've got to say, and let my face be. I can show my teeth when I want. That's enough for you. Why have you sent for me?

TIGG (*going on with his dressing and avoiding the question*). But what is a light sleeper, Jonas?

JONAS (*impatently, and walking to the window*). Hang a light sleeper!

TIGG (*sitting in chair R. of table, and eyeing him significantly*). No, no, we won't do that. I know,—dreams—starts—nightmare—ugly faces—agony and all that sort of thing—I see.

JONAS (*coming toward him*). Do you? If you won't come to the point, I will. I'm not satisfied with the state of our affairs.

TIGG. No? Bless me! That's very odd, my dear—

JONAS (*abruptly*). No, I'm not! And mark me!—I'll play the devil with the office, and oblige you to buy me out at a high figure, if you try any of your tricks with me. I must have my money returned on the nail.

TIGG (*sitting back, with assurance*). My dear Chuzzlewit, I want you to advance a little more.

JONAS. Ha, ha! Do you? Devil a farthing!

TIGG. I do most assuredly; and, moreover, introduce a friend of yours.

JONAS. Of course. Ha, ha! You'd be delighted, I dare say—and prove it to be to my advantage, too—wouldn't you?

(*Sneeringly and going R.*)

TIGG (*rising and balancing hair brush on finger*). And it would be; very much, very much.

JONAS (R.). Oh, stuff! You can tell me how, too, can't you?

TIGG (R. C., *fixing his eyes on JONAS*). Shall I tell you how?

JONAS. I think you'd better. (*Comes threateningly toward TIGG.*) Strange things have been done in the assurance way before now by strange sorts of men, and I mean to take care of myself.

TIGG (*crossing and sitting L. of table*). Chuzzlewit! (*Leans forward with arms on table.*) Strange things have been done, and are done every day; not only in our way, but in a variety of other ways. And no one suspects them. But ours, as you say, my good friend, is a strange way; and we strangely happen, sometimes, to come into the knowledge of very strange events. (*Looks around toward NAD., and beckons to JONAS, who sits R. of table, leaning toward TIGG. TIGG leans forward and whispers in JONAS' ear. JONAS, with a cry, places his hand on TIGG'S mouth and sits back rigid with terror. TIGG, rising coolly, resumes his toilet.*) You'll not object to venture a trifle more, or introduce a friend now, my dear Chuzzlewit, will you?

JONAS (*with his eyes fixed in horror on the floor*). No, no, no!

TIGG (*at back of table*). Jonas, my dear fellow, I want Pecksniff in with us. You've married his daughter and know something of his affairs. He has money?

JONAS (*without looking up*). He has.

TIGG. I'll leave him in your hands. Or, what say you? Shall we visit him together? Come, you shall dine with us to-day, and we will arrange the affair over a bottle of wine.

JONAS (*still without looking up*). I'll do my best.

TIGG. A thousand thanks! You're a noble fellow, Jonas! I've not breakfasted yet. (*Comes down L. C., putting on dressing-gown.*) Will you join me? Coffee or chocolate?

JONAS. Neither! This is no breakfast hour. (*Eyes him.*)

TIGG. By way of lunch, then. Which shall it be, hung beef or tongue?

JONAS (*sulkily*). I hate 'em both!

TIGG. Jonas, I'd give the world for your spirits, I would indeed. Shall we walk down-stairs? Mr. Nadgett will order lunch. Come along, old fellow.

(*Goes to door, L., which he opens, and exits preceded by NAD.*)

JONAS (*seated R. of table*). By what infernal agency has he discovered this? Can I have betrayed myself in any way? So, then, I am in his power! Life—money—all! And he would profit by it! Would? He will. No; there is a way! One more crime and I am safe! I'll do it. This very night, too. He drives me to it. It's his own fault. Curse him.

CURTAIN

SCENE 2.—At ANTHONY CHUZZLEWIT'S. *Same as Act II.*

(*CHUF. sitting by fireplace. SARAH bustling about putting room to rights.*)

CHUF. (*lifting up his hand*). His son! His son!

SARAH. Well, I'm sure! You're a-settling of it, Mr. Chufey. To your satisfaction, sir, I 'ope. But I wouldn't lay a pincushin' on it myself, sir, though you *are* so well informed. Drat the old creetur, a deal he knows of sons—or darters either! Suppose you was to favor us with some remarks on twins, sir, *would* you be so good! (*Knock at door in flat. SARAH goes to door, opens it, and admits TOM, CHAR. and Mr. MODDLE.*) Why, goodness me! To think that I should see beneath this blessed 'ouse, which well I know it (*getting chair from R. and bringing it forward for CHAR. to sit in*), Miss Pecksniff, my sweet young lady, to be a 'ouse as there is not a many like, worse luck, and wishin' it ware not so. To think that I should see under this individual roof Mr. Pinch. (*Gets chair for TOM and places it R. of CHAR.*) I take the liberty, though almost unbeknownst, and do assure you of it, sir. Won't you sit 'ere? (*Offers chair L. of table to MOD.*) If you will excude me I'll call Mrs. Chuzzlewit. (*Bows and goes out door, L.*)

CHAR. Of course, Mr. Pinch, it will be useless for me to disguise, after what you have seen, that I am about to be united

to the gentleman who is sitting there by the table. It would be in vain to conceal it. What do you think of him? Pray let me have your candid opinion.

TOM (*doubtfully*). I should say he was a very eligible young man.

CHAR. I'm curious to know whether you have observed, or fancied, that he is of a rather melancholy turn?

TOM. Why, he has impressed me, at first sight, as looking rather low.

CHAR. No, really? Well! That is quite remarkable! Everybody says the same. What do you think is the cause of his appearance of depression?

TOM. Well, really, I haven't the slightest idea.

CHAR. My dear Mr. Pinch, I shouldn't wish it to be known, but I don't mind mentioning it to you, having known you for so many years, I refused Augustus three times. He is of a most amiable and sensitive nature; always ready to shed tears if you look at him, which is extremely charming, and he has never recovered from the effect of that cruelty. Think what my feelings would have been if I had goaded him to suicide, and it had got into the papers.

(MOD. *rises and crosses back of table to window, R., and stands looking down into the street.*)

TOM (*looking at MOD.*). He really looks quite low. I think I'll speak to him, if you don't mind.

CHAR. Do, Mr. Pinch, try to cheer him up a bit.

(TOM *rises and crosses to MOD.*)

TOM (*to MOD.*). I wonder that in the crowded streets the foot passengers are not oftener run over.

MOD. (*gloomily, still looking down into the street*). The drivers won't do it.

TOM. What do you mean?

MOD. There are some men who *can't* get run over. They live a charmed life. Coal wagons recoil from them, and even cabs refuse to run them down. Ah! (*Looks gloomily at TOM.*) There *are* such men. One of 'em is a friend of mine.

Enter MER., from L. CHAR. *rises and crosses to her.*

CHAR. Merry, my darling! here are Mr. Pinch and Mr. Moddle come to see you. I believe you have seen *him* before.

(MER. *crosses and shakes hands with TOM and MOD. CHAR. crosses to CHUF.*) And how do you do, Mr. Chuffey, though it's of no use asking you the question, I'm well aware. (*Crossing front of table.*) Augustus, my sweet child, bring me a chair. (MOD. *takes chair from R. of table; CHAR. sits R. C. In an audible whisper to MOD., who is starting to cross to window.*) You can come and sit by me if you like.

(MOD. *gloomily gets chair, puts it beside her and sits down on her right; she puts her hand in his and covers it with her shawl. MER. and TOM stand talking by the window.*)

Enter SARAH, from L.

SARAH (*crossing to C. and looking beamingly on the company*). Now, ain't we rich in beauty this 'ere jyful arternoon, I'm sure. I knows a lady, which her name, I'll not deceive you, Mrs. Chuzzlewit, is 'Arris, her 'usband's brother bein' six foot three, and marked with a mad bull in Wellington boots on his left arm, on account of his precious mother bein' worrited by one into a shoemaker's shop. And often have I said to Mrs. 'Arris, "Oh, Mrs. 'Arris, marm! Your countenance is quite a angel's!" Which but for pimples it would be. "No, Sairy Gamp," says she, "you best of 'ard-workin' and industrious creeturs as ever was underpaid at any price, which underpaid you are quite dif'rent, 'Arris had it done afore marriage at ten and six," she says, "and wore it faithful next his 'eart till the color run, when the money was declined to give back, but he never said it was a angel's, Sairy, wotever he might have thought." If Mrs. 'Arris's 'usband was 'ere now (*looking around and dropping a curtsey*) he'd speak out plain, he would, and his dear wife would be the last to blame him! For if ever a woman lived as know'd not wot it was to form a wish to pizon them as 'ad good looks, and 'ad no region give her by the best of 'usbands, Mrs. 'Arris is the 'eavenly dispogician! (*Crosses to CHUF. and shakes him by the shoulder.*) Rouge yourself, and look up! Come! 'ere's company, Mr. Chuffey.

CHUF. (*looking humbly around the room*). I'm sorry for it. I know I'm in the way. I ask pardon, but I've nowhere else to go. Where is she? (MER. *crosses to him and kneels beside him on his R. CHUF. pats her cheek.*) Ah! Here she is! Here she is! She's never hard on poor old Chuffey. Poor old Chuff! Aye, aye! It's hard to bear, but never

mind him. He'll die one day. There are three hundred and sixty-five days in the year, and he may die on any one of 'em.

SARAH (*standing behind CHUF.'s chair*). You're a wearing old soul, and that's the sacred truth. It's a pity you don't know wot you say, for you'd tire your own patience out if you did, and fret yourself into a 'appy releage for all as knows you.

Enter MAID, door in flat, with tray, on which are tea and cakes. She places them on table.

MER. Will you please serve tea for us, Mrs. Gamp?

SARAH (*crossing to back of table and sitting down*). And quite a fambly it is to make tea for, and wot a 'appiness to do it! My good young 'ooman (*to the servant girl*), p'raps somebody would like to try a new-laid egg or two not biled too 'ard. Likeways, a few rounds of buttered toast, first cuttin' off the crust, in consequence of tender teeth and not too many of 'em, which Gamp 'imself, Mrs. Chuzzlewit, at one blow, bein' in liquor, struck out four, two single and two double, as was took by Mrs. 'Arris as a keepsake, and is carried in her pocket at this present hour, along with two cramp-bones, a bit o' ginger, and a grater like a blessed infant's shoe, in tin, with a little heel to put the nutmeg in, as many times I've seen and said within the month.

(During her speech she has served the tea, and TOM has passed it around to all but CHUF. After which TOM sits R. with teacup. There is a pause while they sip their tea, SARAH favoring the company between her sips with a smile, a wink, or some other mark of notice.)

CHUF. (*suddenly leaning forward*). Who's lying dead up-stairs?

MER. (*turning to him*). No one. (*Rises.*) What is the matter?

CHUF. All here! Where is *he* then,—my old master, Mr. Chuzzlewit, who had the only son? Where is he?

MER. Hush! Hush! (*Crosses and puts cup on table and returns to CHUF.*) That happened long ago. Don't you recollect?

CHUF. Recollect! As if I could forget! As if I ever could forget! (*Sinks back, hands over his face. Then starts suddenly forward.*) Who's lying dead up-stairs?

MER. (*trying to soothe him*). No one!

CHUF. You think not. But they don't tell you. No, no,

poor thing! They don't tell you. Who are these and why are they merrymaking here if there is no one dead? Foul play! Go see who it is! (MER. *makes a sign to the others not to speak to him.*) Where's Jonas?

MER. In the country.

CHUF. They don't tell you. They don't tell me either; but I'll watch! I'll watch. They shall not hurt you. (*Pats her hands.*) Don't be frightened. When you have sat up watching, I have sat up watching too. Aye, aye, I have! (*Clinches his hands.*) Many a night I've been ready!

SARAH (*rising and crossing to back of CHUF.*). Why, highty tighty, sir, is these your manners? You want a pitcher o' cold water throwed over you to bring you 'round; that's my belief; and if you was under Betsy Prig you'd have it too, I do assure you, Mr. Chuffey. Who's dead indeed! It wouldn't be no grievous loss if some one was, I think!

MER. He's quiet now, Mrs. Gamp. Don't disturb him.

CHUF. (*muttering*). Foul play! Foul play!

SARAH. Oh, bother the old wictim, Mrs. Chuzzlewit; I ain't no patience with 'im. You give 'im his own way too much by 'alf. A worritin', wexagious creetur! (*Shakes him backward and forward two or three times, and loosens his cravat.*) There! If you should turn at all faint we could soon rewive you, sir, I promige you. Bite a person's thumbs, or turn their fingers the wrong way, and they comes to wonderful, Lord bless you!

(*During this scene CHAR. and MOD. have risen, and placed their cups on table. MOD. has taken his hat and goes toward door in flat.*)

CHAR. (*to TOM, aside, on R.*). Ah, Mr. Pinch! It all comes of this unfortunate marriage. If my sister had not been so precipitate and had not united herself to a wretch, there would have been no Mr. Chuffey in the house.

TOM (*rising*). Hush! She'll hear you.

CHAR. (*raising her voice*). I should be very sorry if she did hear me, Mr. Pinch, for it is not in my nature to add to the uneasiness of any person; far less of my own sister. I know what a sister's duties are, Mr. Pinch, and I hope I always showed it in my practice. (*Goes up and joins MOD.*)

TOM (*crossing to MER.*). I will write to your husband and explain to him, as I would have done if I had met him here, that if he has sustained any inconvenience through my means,

it is not my fault, a postman not being more innocent of the news he brings than I was when I handed him that letter.

MER. I thank you! It may do some good. (*They go toward door in flat. A door is heard to slam; TOM stops and looks at MER. MER., timidly.*) It is Jonas!

TOM. I'd better not meet him on the stairs, perhaps. I'll wait for him here a moment.

(*Goes up stage so that he is not seen by JONAS on his entrance.*)

Enter JONAS, with a bundle under his arm, door in flat.

MER. *goes to meet him. He pushes her aside.*

JONAS (*looking surlily at CHAR. and MOD., who are R. C.*). I didn't know you'd got a party.

(*Goes down L. C. and sits sulkily in chair L. of table, putting bundle on table.*)

CHAR. Oh, dear! Pray don't let us intrude on your domestic happiness! That *will* be a pity. We have taken tea here, sir, in your absence; but if you will have the goodness to send us a note of the expense, receipted, we shall be happy to pay it. Augustus, my love, we will go, if you please. It would be a pity, indeed, to spoil the bliss which this gentleman always brings with him; especially into his own home.

MER. (*up C., imploringly*). Charity! Charity!

CHAR. (*up R. C., with scorn*). Merry, my dear, I am much obliged to you for your advice, but *I* am not his slave.

JONAS. No, nor wouldn't have been if you could. We know all about it.

CHAR. (*coming down R. C.*). What did you say, sir?

JONAS (*slouching down in his chair*). Didn't you hear? I'm not a-goin' to say it again. If you like to stay, you may stay. If you like to go, you may go. But if you stay, please to be civil.

CHAR. Beast! (*Sweeps up and turns at door.*) Augustus! He's beneath your notice! (*MOD. makes faint demonstration of shaking his fist. CHAR. screams.*) Come away, child! I command you!

(*Grabs MOD. by the arm and drags him out of the room.*

TOM comes down R. C. SARAH crosses to R., at back.

JONAS, looking up, perceives TOM for the first time.)

JONAS (*springing up*). Damn you !

(*Raises his chair to dash at TOM, then pauses irresolutely.*)

TOM. You have no cause to be violent, sir. Though what I wish to say relates to your own affairs, I know nothing of them, and desire to know nothing of them. I gave you a letter the other day when you were about to go abroad.

JONAS. You thief, you did ! I'll pay you for the carriage of it one day, I will !

TOM. You needn't waste words or threats. I wish you to understand that I'm no party to the contents of that letter. That I know nothing of it. That I was not even aware that it was to be delivered to you ; and that I had it from ——

JONAS. By the Lord ! I'll knock your brains out if you speak another word.

(*Raises chair to strike TOM.*)

MER. (*running between them*). Tom, for the love of heaven, leave the house. (*SARAH throws herself on TOM, forcing him out of the door. MER. closes the door after them, falls on her knees with her hands raised to JONAS.*) Don't, Jonas ! Don't be harsh with me !

JONAS (*looking down at her*). So, so ! These are your friends, are they, when I am away ? You plot and tamper with this sort of people, do you ?

MER. No, indeed ! I have no knowledge of these secrets and no clew to their meaning. I've never seen him since I left home but once—but twice—before to-day.

JONAS (*sneering*). Oh ! But once, but twice, eh ? Which do you mean ? Twice *and* once perhaps. Three times ! How many more, you lying jade ? (*He raises his hand as if to strike ; she shrinks down hastily.*) How many more times ?

MER. No more. The other morning, and to-day, and once beside.

(*He is about to strike her when a clock begins striking eight. He stops and listens. As the clock ceases, he reaches down and pulls her to her feet.*)

JONAS. Don't lie there ! Get up ! (*Hauls her to her feet and holds her tightly by the arm.*) Listen to me, young lady, and don't whine when you have no occasion, or I may make some for you. If I find him in my house again, or find that

you have seen him elsewhere, you'll repent it. Now, attend. What's the time?

MER. It struck eight a minute ago.

JONAS (*looking at her intently and speaking with labored distinctness*). I have been traveling day and night, and am tired. I have lost some money and that does not improve me. Have Mrs. Gamp bring me up some supper, and have the truckle bed made up in the little room there. (*Points R.*) I shall sleep there to-night, and maybe to-morrow night; and if I can sleep all day to-morrow so much the better, for I've got to sleep it off if I can. Keep the house quiet and don't call me. Mind! Don't call me. Don't let anybody call me. Let me lie there.

MER. I understand. Is that all?

JONAS. All what? You must be prying and questioning! What more do you want to know?

MER. I want to know nothing, Jonas, but what you tell me. All hope of confidence between us has long deserted me.

JONAS. Ecod, I should hope so!

(*Goes down to chair, R. of table.*)

MER. (*coming timidly down on his R.*). But if you will tell me what you wish, I will be obedient and try to please you. I make no merit of that, for I have no friend, either in my father or sister, but am quite alone. I am very humble and submissive. You told me you would break my spirit, and you have done so. Do not break my heart, too!

(*Lays her hand upon his shoulder timidly. He suffers it to remain there for a moment and looks exultingly at her; then shaking her hand off, he sits sullenly in chair, R. of table.*)

JONAS. Well, then, show your obedience by doing what I tell you, without any more delay.

(*MER., crushed and broken, exits L. JONAS, after a pause, pulls up his right sleeve and feels the muscles of his arm, with his fist clenched.*)

Enter SARAH with supper things; she advances rather timidly and places them on table; then to pretend unconcern, crosses toward CHUF., affecting great solicitude.

SARAH. And how is he now, sir?

JONAS (*raising his head and staring at her*). Who?

SARAH. To be sure, sir, what am I thinking of! You wasn't 'ere, sir, when 'e was took so strange.

(*Looks toward CHUF., goes to him and places her hand on his head.*)

JONAS. Chuffey, eh? Ha!

SARAH. The creetur's 'ead's so 'ot that you might 'eat a flat-iron on it. And no wonder, I am sure, considerin' the things 'e said!

JONAS (*suddenly looking around at SARAH*). Said! What did he say?

SARAH (*putting her hand on her heart, turning up her eyes and speaking in a faint voice*). The awfullest things, Mr. Chuzzlewit, as ever I heerd! Which Mrs. 'Arris's father never spoke a word when took so, some does and some don't, except sayin' when he come 'round, "Where is Sairy Gamp?" But raily, sir, when Mr. Chuffey comes to ask who's lyin' dead up-stairs, and —

JONAS (*rising, aghast*). Who's lying dead up-stairs!

SARAH (*nodding and making as if swallowing*). Who's lyin' dead up-stairs; such was his bibil language; and where was Mr. Chuzzlewit, as 'ad the only son; and when 'e goes a-whisperin' softly to 'isself about foul play; it gives me sech a turn, I don't denige it, Mr. Chuzzlewit, that I never could 'ave kept myself up but for a little drain of spirits, which I seldom touches, but could always wish to know where to find, if so disposed, never knowin' wot may 'appen next, the world bein' so uncertain.

JONAS. Why, the fool's mad. (*Crosses to window.*)

SARAH. That's my opinion, sir, and I will not deceive you. I believe as Mr. Chuffey, sir, rekwires attention, if I may make so bold, and should not 'ave his liberties to wex and worrit your sweet lady as he does.

JONAS (*looking across at CHUF.*). Ecod, you're right. I have half a mind to shut him up. (*SARAH rubs her hands, smiles, shakes her head, and sniffs expressively.*) Could you — could you take care of such an idiot, now, in some spare room up-stairs?

SARAH. Me and a friend of mine, one off, one on, could do it, Mr. Chuzzlewit, our charges not bein' 'igh, but wishin' they

was lower. Me and Betsy Prig, sir, could undertake Mr. Chuffey reasonable and give every satigefaction.

JONAS (*who has been walking up and down the room and glancing across at CHUF.*). Well! Look after him for the present, and, let me see, three days from this time let the other woman come here, and we'll see if we can make a bargain of it. Keep your eye on him in the meantime, and don't talk about it. He's as mad as a March hare.

SARAH. Madder! A deal madder!

JONAS. See to him, then; take care that he does no harm, and recollect what I have told you.

SARAH (*shaking CHUF., and helping him to rise, walks him to door in flat*). Now, then, old Chuffey, come along with Sairy. She'll see you don't come to no harm, nor do none either. Out you go. [*Exit through door in flat with CHUF.*

JONAS (*looking after them*). Mr. Chuff, it'll be pretty easy to be even with you. (*Lights candle and puts it on table.*) It's no use doing things by halves, and as long as I stop here I'll take good care of you. (*Sits at table and begins to eat. Pauses.*) When I'm gone you may say what you please. (*Eats and drinks.*) But it's a damned strange thing (*pushing his plate from him*) that his drivelings should have taken this turn just now. (*Pauses. Sits looking at the floor.*) I say just now, but for anything I know, he may have been carrying on the same game all along. Old dog! He shall be gagged! (*Eats and drinks. Rises, locks doors; draws curtains; takes off coat and shoes; takes smock frock and heavy boots from bundle and puts them on; also slouch hat. Puts the boots he has taken off down by the door of room, R. Goes to window and looks cautiously out.*) The streets are clear. A bad night. The better for my purpose! Now, Mr. Tigg. Now to stop your babbling forever! (*Goes to door in flat; unlocks it and looks cautiously out, listening.*) All's quiet. Good!

(*Closes door softly. Blows out candle. Exits cautiously into room, R. Door is heard to lock from outside.*)

CURTAIN

ACT V

SCENE.—*Same as Act IV. Morning.*

Enter JONAS. *His face is haggard. He is dressed as in Act I. He goes to the fireplace where a small fire is burning.*

JONAS. As soon as the alarm abates I must escape. Everything is lost. Pecksniff's money, too. But I've had revenge. The man is dead. Nothing can undo that. When will the body be discovered? (*Crosses to window and looks cautiously out.*) What's that they're reading in the shop opposite? It's a printed bill! (*Gazes intently through window.*) Is it found? Do they suspect me? (*Door in flat opens.*) What's that?

(*Turns quickly.*)

SARAH (*in doorway*). A pleasant evenin' though warm, which bless you, Mr. Chuzzlewit, we must expect when cow-cumbers is three for tuppence.

JONAS. Where's my wife?

SARAH. I don't know, sir.

JONAS. Find her and tell her I want her here.

SARAH. Ye-es, sir.

[*Exit.*]

JONAS. Always stealing away from the house. She's no friend of mine. Who can tell what devil's mischief she and her friends might hatch together! (*Crosses again to window and looks cautiously out. Enter SARAH.*) Well, where is she? Has she come?

SARAH. No. I 'ear she left 'ere full three hours ago.

JONAS. Left here! Alone?

SARAH. I—I—I don't know, sir; I never thought to ask.

JONAS. Curse you for a fool. Let me know when she comes in.

SARAH. Yes, sir.

[*Exit.*]

(JONAS, *at window, looks cautiously out as before.*)

JONAS. They're still reading the paper, and a third man has joined them. They're having a dispute, and one of 'em

steps back to illustrate some act by his gestures. Horror! How like the blow with which I struck him down in the wood!

(He staggers back, dropping into a chair.)

Enter SARAH.

SARAH. Mr. Chuffey is a-lyin' down, and much good may it do him, Mr. Chuzzlewit, which 'arm it can't and good it may, be joyful!

JONAS *(hoarsely, pointing to chair L. of table)*. Sit down and let us get this business done. Where is the other woman?

SARAH *(sitting nervously)*. The other person is with him now.

JONAS *(rising)*. That's right, he's not fit to be left to himself. You — Hush! *(Listens.)* It's nothing. You told me the other woman's name. I forget it.

SARAH. I—I mentioned Betsy Prig, sir.

JONAS. She is to be trusted, is she?

SARAH. That she ain't! Nor 'ave I brought her, Mr. Chuzzlewit. I've brought another which engages to give every satifefaction.

JONAS. What's her name? *(SARAH looks at him in an odd way, apparently afraid to answer.)* What's her name?

SARAH *(hesitating)*. Her name is—is—'Arris.

(Presses her hand upon her side and turns up her eyes as if she were going to faint away.)

JONAS. Well! You and she have arranged to take care of him, have you?

SARAH *(nodding her head)*. Turn and turn about; one off, one on. *(Places her hand on her heart.)* Which fiddle-strings is weakness to expredge my nerves to-day!

JONAS. We shall not quarrel about terms. Let me see the other person. *(Crosses to fireplace, L.)*

SARAH *(rising)*. The—the t'other person, sir?

JONAS. Aye! Go you to him and send the other here. Quick! I'm busy.

(SARAH takes two or three backward steps toward the door and stops.)

SARAH. It is your wishes, Mr. Chuzzlewit, to see the t'other person, is it?

(JONAS turns to look at her, as the door opens and OLD M. and CHUF. enter the room. OLD M. is now erect in direct contrast to his appearance in previous acts. JONAS starts back. CHUF. remains up R. of door.)

OLD M. (*coming R. C.*). This man is my brother's son. Ill-met, ill-trained, ill-begotten. If he moves from the spot on which he stands, open the window and call for help.

(SARAH hurries across to window and stands ready to call.)

JONAS. What right have you to give such directions in this house?

OLD M. The right of your wrong-doing. Come in, there!

(LEW. appears in doorway.)

JONAS (*giving a startled exclamation*). Ah! (*Steps back and supports himself by grasping back of chair, L. LEW. steps in, closing the door and standing before it.*) I know that fellow. (*Fetches his breath and points his finger at LEW.*) He's the greatest liar alive. What's his last tale? Ha, ha! You're rare fellows, too. Why, that uncle of mine is childish. (*Points at OLD M.*) He's a greater child than his brother, my father, was in his old age; or than Chuffey is. What the devil do you mean (*to LEW.*) by coming here, and bringing two idiots with you, to take my house by storm? Hallo, there! Open the door! Turn these strangers out!

LEW. You've said enough. Don't try to look bold at me. Go on, sir (*to OLD M.*), bring the murdering vagabond to his knees.

SARAH (*at window*). Go on, sir. If he wants noise he shall 'ave enough of it; for as sure as he's a-shiverin' from 'ead to foot, I'll raise a huproar at this winder as shall bring 'alf London in.

OLD M. (*extending his hand toward JONAS*). This is the man, is it?

LEW. You need do no more than look at him to be sure of that, or of the truth of what I've said.

OLD M. Oh, brother, brother! Were we strangers half our lives that you might breed a wretch like this, and I make a desert by withering every flower that grew about me! You are confronted by this man (*pointing to LEW.*) to be dealt with justly. And you (*to CHUF.*), for the love of your old friend, speak out, good fellow.

(*Puts his hand on CHUF.'s shoulder and brings him forward, R. C.*)

CHUF. (R. C.). I have been silent for his love. He urged me to do it. He made me promise it upon his dying bed. I never would have spoken but for your finding out so much. We were at school together, he and I. I couldn't turn against his son, you know, his only son. He never spoke unkindly to me, and I always understood him. I could always see him, too, though my sight was dim. Well, well! He's dead, he's dead. (SARAH, *who has been glancing out of window, leaves room by door in flat.*) But where is she? She has not come home!

OLD M. Do you mean his wife?

CHUF. Yes.

OLD M. I have removed her. She is in my care, and will be spared the present knowledge of what is passing here. She has known misery enough, without that addition.

(JONAS, *appalled, starts as if he would attempt to escape, but sinks into the chair with stark, staring eyes.*)

CHUF. But you're wrong, you're wrong. Have patience, for the truth is only known to me!

OLD M. How can that be? You said just now, above stairs, that you knew he was his father's murderer.

CHUF. (*wildly*). Aye, yes! And so he was! But not as you suppose. Stay! Give me a moment's time. I have it all here. (*Strikes his head.*) All here! It was foul, cruel, bad; but not as you suppose. He bought the stuff (*stretching out his arm toward JONAS*), no doubt, as you have heard, and brought it home. He mixed the stuff—look at him—with some sweetmeat in a jar, exactly as the medicine for his father's cough was mixed, and put it in a drawer; in that drawer yonder in the desk; he knows which drawer I mean! He kept it there locked up. But his courage failed him, or his heart was touched—and he did not put it in the usual place, where my old master would have taken it twenty times a day. (JONAS *covers down into his chair.*) He put it in that drawer, as I have said. He went so often there and was so secret, that his father took notice of it, and when he was out, had it opened. We were there together, and we found the mixture, Mr. Chuzzlewit and I. He took it into his possession, and made light of it at the time; but in the night he came to my bedside,

weeping, and told me that his own son had it in his mind to poison him. "Oh, Chuff!" he said. "Oh, dear old Chuff! A voice came into my room to-night and told me that this crime began with me. It began when I taught him to be too covetous of what I have to leave, and made the expectation of it his great business!" Those were his very words! "He shall not weary for my death, Chuff; I have sown and I must reap. He shall believe that I am taking this, and when I see that he is sorry I'll tell him that I found it out, and I'll forgive him." (CHUF. *pauses to wipe his eyes.* OLD M. *has sunk into a chair, R. C., with his face hidden in his hands.* JONAS *has looked up and shows by his expression that he has hopes to escape.*) My dear old master made believe next day that he had opened the drawer by mistake, and had been surprised to find his fresh supply of medicine in such a place. We burnt it; but his son believed that he was taking it—he knows he did. (JONAS, *giving a short dry cough, changes his position for an easier one, and folds his arms without looking at them.*) My old master sank and altered from the time he came to me in the night, and never held up his head again. And then his heart broke. 'Twas only a few days, but he had never changed so much in twice the years. "Spare him, Chuff!" he said to me. I promised him I would. I've tried to do it. He's his only son.

(His voice fails him, and making a motion with his hand he retreats to his corner by the fireplace and sits there bowed with grief.)

JONAS (*rising*). Well! Are you satisfied? Or have you any more of your plots to broach? Why, that fellow, Lewsome, can invent 'em by the score. Have you nothing else? This place is not attached to you and you can't leave it too soon. And for my wife, old man, send her home straight or it will be the worse for her. It isn't hanging for a man to keep a penn'orth of poison for his own purposes and have it taken from him by two old crazy jolter-heads who go and act a play about it. Do you see the door?

(Goes up and throws the door open, going down R. by window.)

OLD M. (*rising and crossing L. C.*): Do you see the door? Look at it!

(*The door opens and NAD. and two policemen, followed by SARAH, appear on the threshold.*)

NAD. (*up c.*). That is the man! By the window! (JONAS, *who has turned, stands as if paralyzed, gazing at NAD. Two officers come down and seize and handcuff him.*) Let no one interfere. I accuse him yonder of the murder of Mr. Montague. Our suspicions began (*addressing OLD M.*) in a quarrel between this man and another office in which his father's life was insured, and which had so much doubt and distrust on the subject that he compounded with them and took half the money; and was glad to do it. Bit by bit, I've ferreted out more circumstances against him. I found the nurse—here she is to confirm me (SARAH *curtseys*); I found the doctor. I found out how the old gentleman there, Mr. Chuffey, had behaved at the funeral; and I found out what this man (*touching LEW. on the arm*) had talked about in his fever. I found out how he conducted himself before his father's death, and since; and putting it carefully together, made case enough for Mr. Montague to tax him with the crime, which, as he himself believed until to-night, he had committed. I have watched him lately, almost without rest or relief. I little thought to what my watching was to lead. As little as he did when he slipped out in the night, dressed in those clothes which he afterward sunk in a bundle at London Bridge! (JONAS, *with a cry, tries to wrench himself free from the officers, but they hold him securely.*) From that garret window opposite, I watched this house and him for days and nights. From that garret window opposite, I saw him return home, alone, from a journey on which he had set out with Mr. Montague, and, standing at the door opposite, after dark that same night, I saw a countryman steal out of this house, by a side door in the court, who had never entered it. I knew his walk, and that it was himself, disguised. I followed him immediately, but lost him on the western road. I knew he would come back, as he had gone out, when this part of the town was empty, and for his coming back I watched. Early in the morning, the same countryman came creeping home. I kept at the window all day. At night I saw him come out with a bundle. I followed him again. He went down the steps at London Bridge and sunk it in the river. It contained the clothes I had seen him wear, stained with clay and spotted with blood. The warrant has been out, and these officers have been with me some

hours. We chose our time; and seeing you come in, and seeing this person at the window (*indicating SARAH*)——

SARAH. Beckoned to 'er to open the door; which she did with a deal o' pleasure.

NAD. That's all at present. Are you ready, officer?

OFFICER. All ready, sir.

JONAS. Oh, miserable, miserable fool! To find alive and active—a party to it all—the brain and right hand of the secret I had thought to crush!

(Putting his fettered hands before his eyes he is led out by the officers, followed by NAD. and LEW.)

OLD M. (*to SARAH*). You gave my message to my nephew, Martin Chuzzlewit, Mrs. Gamp?

SARAH. I did, sir, and you never see a gentleman more surpridged in all your born days.

OLD M. What more did you tell him?

SARAH. Why, sir, I should 'ave liked to tell 'im a deal more, but not bein' able, I didn't tell it, sir.

OLD M. For what does he suppose that he is to come here?

SARAH. 'E don't know what to suppose, sir. I told 'im that you said to 'im, through me, "Can you be 'ere by ten in the mornin'?" That's all, sir.

OLD M. Now you can take Mr. Chuffey to his room, and after, I want you to tend the outer door—give admission to visitors, I mean, when they knock.

SARAH. Suttinly, sir. (*Goes to CHUF., who is dozing in chair by fireplace, and wakes him with a poke.*) There's my blessed old chick! There's my darlin' Mr. Chuffey! (*Raises him from his chair.*) Now come up to your own room, sir, and lay down on your bed a bit; for you're a-shakin' all over, as if yer precious jint was hung on wires. That's a good creetur! Come with Sairy! [*Exit door in flat with CHUF.*]

OLD M. (*closing door after them, and pausing up c.*). My cherished projects, so long hidden in my own breast, so frequently in danger of abrupt disclosure through the bursting forth of the indignation I have hoarded up during my residence with Pecksniff, are now approaching their fruition. To-day I shall set Pecksniff right, and Pecksniff's victims, too. They have severally been notified to meet here at ten o'clock to-day. It is near that now. (*Knock at street door.*) Ah! (*Assumes his former weak aspect.*) My first guests are arriving.

(Sits in CHUF.'s chair at fireplace.)

Enter SARAH, ushering in TOM and MARY.

SARAH (announcing). Miss Graham. Mr. Pinch.

MARY (crossing and kissing OLD M.). Why, Mr. Chuzzlewit, how came you here, alone? [Exit.

OLD M. Sit down, my dear. (MARY looking surprised, sits in chair L. of fireplace.) Ah, Mr. Pinch, your hand.

(TOM comes forward and shakes hands with OLD M. Another knock. All look toward door.)

Enter MAR.

MAR. (starting forward). Mary!

OLD M. (holding up his hand, without looking at MAR.). Sit there. (Points to chair on other side of room. MAR. pauses, looks at MARY, who smiles reassuringly, and he crosses to R. and sits. Another knock.) Set the door open, Mr. Pinch, and come here.

(TOM opens door wide and returns to OLD M.)

PECK. (outside). Where is my venerable friend? (Enters quickly and starts back on seeing who are with OLD M.) My venerable friend is well?

OLD M. Quite well.

PECK. (clasping his hands and looking up in ecstasy). Thank heaven for that. Ah, my venerable friend! Why this flight? How could you ever leave me? You have absented yourself upon some act of kindness to me, I do not doubt, or you have been moved to do some service to this ingrate. (Looks at TOM, and then at MAR.) Oh, vermin! Oh, bloodsuckers!

TOM (starting toward PECK.). How dare you, sir?

PECK. (waving TOM aside and crossing to OLD M.). My venerable friend, this is no place for you. (To MARY.) My dear young lady, help me to remove this patriarchal gentleman, to whose tottering limbs I have the honor to act as an unworthy, but, I hope, an unassuming prop, to a place of security. My dear sir, come.

TOM (C.). Mr. Pecksniff, will you answer me one question?

PECK. (L. C.). I cannot answer questions. I can only say, unnatural plunderers and robbers, begone.

(*Waves his hand toward door.*)

TOM. I—I don't want to bluster, but I tell you I will be heard, and answered, too. I ask you why I was dismissed?

PECK. (*sweetly*). Because, Tom Pinch, since you compel me to address you, because you were an ungrateful worm, who turned upon the hand that fed you and made use of your position to insinuate yourself into the affections of Miss Graham.

MARY (*advancing to the side of TOM*). That is not true.

PECK. My dear Miss Graham, this outburst is unseemly.

MARY. *You* it was who insulted the girl you should have protected. The story you have just repeated, of which I never heard till now, is a fiction of your own inventing.

PECK. (L. C.). Observe! You are agitating your helpless friend here. (MARY *crosses to OLD M.* TOM *crosses to MAR., R.* OLD M. *leans forward, grasping his stick on which he rests his chin.* PECK. *crosses C.*) He has accepted my assurance upon the unhappy matter, and is content to repose peacefully in the bosom of virtue. (*Taps himself.*)

TOM (R. C.). Virtue! You thrust your odious attentions on that young lady by force, and when you knew that she had confided the story of your persecution to me, you thought you could hide the disgrace of the discovery by getting rid of the pupil you had so long imposed upon. That is why you dismissed me.

PECK. Miss Graham, we will resume the discussion on our return to our venerable friend's hotel. I will first put you into a coach, and then—— (*Goes as if to take MARY's hand.*)

MAR. (*rising and crossing R. C.*). If you lay a hand on that lady, Pecksniff, in my presence, I'll take you by the neck and thrust you into the street.

PECK. (*dodging and going quickly down L.*). You may bestride my senseless corse, sir, that is very likely, but while I continue to be called on to exist you must strike at this worthy gentleman through me. My dear Mary, come, we will depart together.

(PECK. *starts to go to MARY, who is R. of OLD M., when the latter suddenly starts up and fells PECK. with a blow from his cane.*)

OLD M. Take him out of my reach, or I cannot help myself. The strong restraint I have put on my hands has palsied them. (PECK. *rises slowly, picks up his hat and crosses C.*)

What! Do you know me as I am at last? Rascal! (PECK. *wipes his forehead with his handkerchief and smiles in a feeble way.*) Martin, look at him (*pointing to PECK.*), and come here. (MAR. *crosses to him.* OLD M. *holds him to his heart.*) And you (*to PECK.*), look here! here! here! (*Each time presses MAR. to him.*) The passion I felt, Martin, when I dared not do this, was in the blow I struck just now. Why did we part? How could you fly from me to him? (MAR. *is about to speak.*) No, no, the fault was mine as well as yours. I made no allowance for the rashness of youth. Mary, my love, come here. (MARY *goes to him.*) Observe, I put myself in that man's hands on terms as base and degrading to himself as I could put them in words. If he had offered me one word of remonstrance in favor of the grandson whom he supposed I had disinherited, I think I could have borne with him. But not a word—not a word.

PECK. (*shedding tears*). Mr. Chuzzlewit, I cannot be angry with you. But did you never, my dear sir, suggest that your grandson should be dismissed from my house? Recollect yourself, my Christian friend.

OLD M. Yes, I did express the wish. I thought I should open his eyes by presenting you before him in your own servile character. (PECK. *bows as if he had been paid a compliment.*) My scheme has succeeded better than I thought, for it has not only proved him, but it has brought my grandson to my feet. And it has proved the constancy and truth of Mary, and it has brought me to know the goodness and simplicity and manly faith of Tom Pinch.

PECK. Mr. Chuzzlewit, sir. You have partaken of my hospitality.

OLD M. And paid for it. (*Points PECK. to door.*)

PECK. Thank you. (*Edges gradually nearer the door, to which OLD M. is pointing with his stick.*) I have been struck this day with a walking-stick, which I have every reason to believe has knobs upon it, on that delicate and exquisite portion of the human anatomy, the brain. Several blows have been inflicted, sir, without a walking-stick, upon that tenderer portion of my frame, my heart. If you ever contemplate the silent tomb, sir, which you will excuse me for entertaining some doubt of your doing, after your conduct this day, think of me. If you should wish to have anything inscribed upon your silent tomb, sir, let it be that!—ah, my dear sir, I, the humble individual, who has now the honor of reproaching you, forgave you.

(As he gets closer to the door, he keeps his eyes on OLD M.)
Good-morning. Bless you, sir. Bless you.

[Exit quickly, door in flat.]

OLD M. Martin, that ghoul has set Mary's hand trembling strangely. See if you can hold it. (Places MARY'S hand in MAR.'S; they go down L.; he crosses C.) Come here, Tom Pinch. (To TOM, who has remained at R. TOM comes to him, R. C.) Your place is here, in the midst of all this happiness, not outside it.

MAR. (crossing to TOM). Tom, old fellow, congratulate me.

TOM. I do with all my heart.

(Shakes MAR.'S hand. MAR. steps back; MARY crosses to TOM and holds out her hand to him. He takes it and slowly kisses her; then sinks into chair, R. C. OLD M. goes to sideboard and pours out four glasses of wine from decanter.)

MAR. (going to MARY, and with his arm about her standing by TOM'S chair). We shall have the little organ in the darkened room after all, Tom!

TOM (leaning over the arm of his chair wistfully, and half aside). Yes, and the T. P. C.'s on the pinafores, eh, Martin?

MAR. Yes, Tom, yes!

OLD M. (coming down R. of TOM and passing wine to MAR., MARY and TOM, and holding glass himself). To-day, before I leave you, I wish you to join me in drinking one toast. Tom Pinch's health. Tom Pinch, whom we all love! The good fellow whose truth and simplicity disposed me, when I doubted every one, to believe in better things. Tom Pinch! Thoughtful of other people, forgetful of himself, patient, loving and lovable, Tom Pinch, we drink to you.

(They lift their glasses to him. He sits with his glass resting on the arm of his chair, his face beaming with smiles.)

CURTAIN

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CHARACTERS

LE ROY BRIGGS, <i>captain of the football team</i>	} <i>Should be played by boys sixteen and seventeen years old.</i>
SAM BIGELOW, <i>centre</i>	
FRED WILLIAMSON, <i>quarter back</i>	
HAROLD SMITH, <i>half back</i>	
PHILIP AINSWORTH, <i>sub</i>	
DICK COLTON, <i>sub.</i>	} <i>Juniors.</i>
RUSSELL SYDNEY	
LEONARD FERGUSON	
STEPHEN REYNOLDS	
CLAYTON KING, <i>football coach and instructor in Milford Academy.</i>	
MURPHY, <i>trainer.</i>	
MR. DEANE, <i>an instructor.</i>	
ALEXANDER NORTON, <i>Manager of the Star Moving Picture Theatre.</i>	
JIMMY COLTON, <i>Dick's little brother, "a regular rah! rah! boy."</i>	

Extra schoolboys and visitors for acts two and three.

ON THE QUIET

A Comedy in Two Acts

By Gladys Ruth Bridgham

Twelve male characters. Costumes, modern; scene, a single interior. Plays an hour and a half. A picturesque and exciting story of the Maine Woods. Some Dartmouth freshmen, camping out, become the victims of a practical joke by one of their number who tires of the unexciting life of the camp. They discover a note telling of a brutal murder in the woods and in their pursuit of the criminal through clues ingeniously furnished by the joker, they get a lot of inoffensive people into a sad mix-up, with the aid of Jeremiah Hincks, a rustic Sherlock Holmes. Very swift and lively and strongly recommended.

Price, 25 cents

HIRAM JONES' BET

A Farce in One Act

By May E. Countryman

One male, two females. Costumes, modern; scenery, an interior. Plays twenty minutes. Hiram Jones, an incurable maker of bets, inveigles two ladies into making wagers with him in regard to the loan of a patent egg-beater; he thinks that he has a safe thing on both, but discovering his plot, the ladies get together and so arrange matters that he loses both bets. Very lively, bright and funny and a sure thing with an audience.

Price, 15 cents

THE VILLAGE POST-OFFICE

An Entertainment in One Scene by Jessie A. Kelley. Twenty-two males and twenty females are called for, but one person may take several parts and some characters may be omitted. The stage is arranged as a country store and post-office in one. Costumes are rural and funny. Plays a full evening. Full of "good lines" and comical incident and character. Strongly recommended for church entertainments or general use; very wholesome and clean. *Price, 25 cents*

MISS FEARLESS & CO.

A Comedy in Three Acts by Belle Marshall Locke. Ten females. Scenery, two interiors; costumes, modern. Plays a full evening. A bright and interesting play full of action and incident. Can be strongly recommended. All the parts are good. Sarah Jane Lovejoy, Katie O'Connor and Euphemia Addison are admirable character parts, and Miss Alias and Miss Alibi, the "silent sisters," offer a side-splitting novelty.

Price, 25 cents

LUCIA'S LOVER

A Farce in Three Acts by Bertha Currier Porter. Eight females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays an hour and a half. A bright and graceful piece, light in character, but sympathetic and amusing. Six contrasted types of girls at boarding-school are shown in a novel story. Lots of fun, but very refined. Easy to produce and can be strongly recommended.

Price, 25 cents

A GIRL IN A THOUSAND

A Comedy in Four Acts by Evelyn Gray Whiting. Fourteen females. Costumes, modern; scenes, three interiors and an exterior. Plays a full evening. Very strong and sympathetic and of varied interest. Irish comedy; strong "witch" character; two very lively "kids"; all the parts good. Effective, easy to produce, and can be strongly recommended as thoroughly wholesome in tone as well as amusing.

Price, 25 cents

MRS. BRIGGS OF THE POULTRY YARD

A Comedy in Three Acts by Evelyn Gray Whiting. Four males, seven females. Scene, an interior; costumes, modern. A domestic comedy looking steadfastly at the "bright side" of human affairs. Mrs. Briggs is an admirable part, full of original humor and quaint sayings, and all the characters are full of opportunity. Simply but effectively constructed, and written with great humor. Plays two hours.

Price, 25 cents

TOMMY'S WIFE

A Farce in Three Acts by Marie J. Warren. Three males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays an hour and a half. Originally produced by students of Wellesley College. A very original and entertaining play, distinguished by abundant humor. An unusually clever piece, strongly recommended.

Price, 25 cents

ENGAGED BY WEDNESDAY

A Farce in Three Acts

By Grace Arlington Owen

Five males, eleven females. Costumes, modern; scenery of little importance. Plays an hour and a half. Arthur Watson and Lucile Persons, long destined for one another by their respective mammas, are suddenly told, after a separation of seven years, that they are to get engaged at once. Neither likes the idea, and being personally unknown to one another, each persuades three friends to masquerade under their names for a day. The result is bewilderingly funny. Very easy, funny and effective. Strongly recommended for schools.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

MARTIN HENRY, *the laziest man in the county.*

ARTHUR WATSON.

JACK, }
TED, } *friends of Arthur's.*
DICK, }

MISS ABIGAIL PERSONS, *a woman of ideas.*

MRS. WATSON, *a gentle person.*

LUCILE PERSONS.

MARIE, }
JANE, } *friends of Lucile.*
MABEL, }

MARY, *Martin Henry's aunt; cook at the Persons'.*

FIRST GIRL.

SECOND GIRL.

FIRST GYPSY.

SECOND GYPSY.

THE TEMPLETON TEAPOT

A Farce in One Act

By Grace Cooke Strong

Four males, four females. Costumes, modern; scenery, an interior. Plays thirty minutes. The Templeton Teapot, a priceless antique, gets tangled up with a modern love-affair and has some strange adventures in consequence, getting the hero arrested as a burglar and every one else sadly mixed up. Bright, brisk and entertaining. Recommended for schools.

Price, 15 cents

THE TURN IN THE ROAD

A Comedy in Two Acts

By Gladys Ruth Bridgham

Nine males. Costumes, modern; scenery, a single interior. Plays an hour and a half. Hiram Skinner's cow gets mixed up with some Colton University students and, besides causing more or less fun and excitement, brings it about that the most insignificant "grind" in college is about the best man there. Sympathetic and interesting. A good high school play.

Price, 15 cents

CRANBERRY CORNERS

A Comedy Drama in Four Acts

By Arthur Lewis Tubbs

Six males, six females. Scenery, one exterior, one interior; costumes, modern. Plays two and a quarter hours. Carlotta, a city girl, is forced by her fashionable aunt to give up her country lover and promise to marry a wealthy scoundrel who controls the aunt through her past. Tom, the rustic lover, discovers Carlotta's father in a tramp, clears his name, baffles the aunt and frustrates her plot. Dramatic and full of interest; strongly recommended. Lots of incidental comedy.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

TOM DEXTER, *one of Nature's noblemen.*

SIDNEY EVERETT, *of the world worldly.*

BEN LATHAM, *a wanderer.*

ANDREW DEXTER, *Tom's father.*

HEZEKIAH HOPKINS, *fond of an argument.*

NATHAN SPECK, *the hired man.*

CARLOTTA BANNISTER, *a child of fate.*

ANASTASIA BANNISTER, *her "stylish" aunt, from New York.*

AMELIA DEXTER, *sister of Andrew.*

MRS. MUSLIN, *something of a talker, "as you might say."*

BELLA ANN, *help at the farm.*

FLORINE, *a maid.*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—The yard at Ferndale Farm, Cranberry Corners, on an afternoon in July. The telegram.

ACT II.—Same as Act I, about a week later. The stranger.

ACT III.—Residence of Mrs. Bannister, New York City. Three months have elapsed. In the hands of fate.

ACT IV.—Back at the farm, two weeks later. The silver lining.

VEAL BREADED

A Comedy in One Act

By John M. Francis

Three males, three females. Costumes, modern; scene, an interior. Plays thirty-five minutes. Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong have married one another, both hating veal, but each under a fixed impression that the other likes it. One of the results of a little flirtation of their friend Joyce with Mrs. A.'s pretty aunt is that the truth comes out and the hated meat is no longer the cause of trouble between them. Very original and amusing and strongly recommended. French dialect comedy character.

Price, 15 cents

A NEW START

A Comedy in Four Acts

By C. A. Pellanus

Seven males, two females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays an hour and a half. A very funny play intended for performance by boys or young men.

CHARACTERS

MR. W. WRIGHTUP, *alias* } *a medical*
DR. PHIL GRAVES, R.S.V.P., P.T.O. } *student.*
MICHAEL SPOWDER, *his servant, from Tipperary.*
COLONEL AILMENT, *a patient.*
MISS O'PHEE, *a patient.*
THOMAS WROTTER, *an ambitious youth.*
MRS. LANGWIDGE, *his aunt, of British origin.*
MR. PERCY VEERING, *an attorney.*
A LABORING MAN.

Price, 15 cents

TOO CLEVER BY HALF

A Comedy in Three Acts

By C. A. Pellanus

Six males, two females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays an hour and a quarter. Very lively and funny; intended for performance by boys or young men.

CHARACTERS

JUDGE SIMEON ADAMS, *a well-to-do, kindly, pompous old bachelor.*
MISS BURGESS, *his housekeeper. With matrimonial schemes.*
NATHAN DEAN, *the village constable. Fat-witted, and gullible.*
HOWARD FOSTER, *a Pinkerton detective. Too clever by half.*
MONSIEUR GASPARD, *a Chef d'Orchestre.*
B. FLAT } *musicians. Britishers.*
A. SHARP }
MRS. S. WORDY, *landlady of the village inn.*

Price, 15 cents

THE FIRST DAY OF THE HOLIDAYS

A Comedy in Four Acts

By C. A. Pellanus

Six male characters. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays an hour and a half. An exceptionally brisk and humorous piece intended for male characters only.

CHARACTERS

PROF. B. WILLDARD, *a naturalist. A short-sighted old man.*
JOB SHIRKER, *a shoemaker. Envious of other men's success.*
JOSEPH SHIRKER, *his son. A tramp.*
HENRY COPPER, *a police officer and a duffer, born in England.*
TOM BOUNDER } *schoolboys. Impertinent and full of high spirits.*
JIM BOUNDER }

Price, 15 cents

THE HEIRESS HUNTERS

A Comedy in Three Acts

By *Walter Ben Hare*

Seven males, seven females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors and an exterior. Plays two hours and twenty minutes. Upon the dark days of Tom, Dick and Harry, author, artist and musician respectively, starving in a New York garret under the dominion of the Widow Wood, dawns the radiant vision of Amethyst Lake, heiress and belle of Kokomo, and a lively competition for her affections at once ensues, greatly complicated by divers previous attachments to La Lolita, the Widow and other energetic ladies. Two hours of highly amusing excitement; all the parts good; very funny. Professional stage-rights reserved. Well recommended.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

TOM TIMMONS, *author*
DICK CHETWYND (*Lora Richard Chetwynd*), *artist*
HARRY CLIVE, *musician*
MAJOR MORANN, *Tom's uncle and Amethyst's guardian.*
WHIMPER, *the only butler in Kokomo.*
AMETHYST LAKE, *the heiress.*
NELL GRAY, *a true American girl.*
LA LOLITA, *a model young lady from Spain.*
MRS. BALLOU, *Amethyst's aunt, with social aspirations.*
THE WIDOW WOOD, *who could blame her?*
JOHN PATRICK WOOD, *aged fourteen.*
PANDORA WOOD, *aged thirteen.*
ROSELLA WOOD, *aged six*
BIJAH WOOD, *a mere splinter* } *no lines to speak.*
} *The Heiress Hunters.*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—The Castle of the Three Musketeers. Off for Kokomo.

ACT II.—The lawn at Lakemont, Kokomo, Indiana. The Widow Wood.

ACT III.—Evening party at Lakemont. Cupid shoots right and left.

THE GREAT CHICKEN CASE

A Mock Trial

By *Allan Burns*

Eight males, four females and jury. Costumes, modern; scenery, unimportant. Plays one hour and forty-five minutes. Henry Henpeck is charged with the larceny of one chicken intended for the consumption of the Ladies' Aid Society of Pumpkin Corners. Very funny and full of local hits, adapted to any locality. Two songs introduced, if desired. A strong addition to the too small list of such entertainments.

Price, 25 cents

LOVE AND TEA

A Comedy Drama of Colonial Times in Two Acts

By Anna Phillips See

Two males, six females. Scenery, a single interior; costumes of the period. Plays an hour and a half. Miss Boltwood, a despotic spinster, joins a band of ladies who forswear tea until the war is over. Her niece, Betty, whose engagement she opposes, catches her in the act of secretly indulging and thus forces her consent. A clever and amusing picture of the period that can be strongly recommended. Fine colored comedy character. All the parts good.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

MISS LAVINIA BOLTWOOD, *a despotic spinster.*

BETTY BOLTWOOD, *her niece.*

MRS. COWLES, *a neighbor.*

MRS. ADAMS, *another.*

MRS. STRONG, *the village gossip.*

MANDY, *slave of Miss Boltwood's.*

JUDGE INGRAM, *a middle-aged bachelor of mild Tory sentiments.*

WILLIAM DICKINSON, *a fiery young minuteman.*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—The living-room of a comfortable village home, a few days after the Battle of Lexington.

ACT II.—The same, not long after the Battle of Bunker Hill.

THE HAPPY DAY

A Farce in One Act

By Octavia Roberts

Seven female characters. Scene, an interior; costumes, modern. Plays half an hour. Sybil Marlowe, a bride, worried to death by the burden of preparation for a fashionable wedding and on the eve of a quarrel with her fiancé over the strenuous entertainments of her friends, cuts the knot when an impossible country cousin turns up with a demand to serve as bridesmaid, and gets married on the quiet. Very bright and lively and strongly recommended.

Price, 15 cents

THIS IS SO SUDDEN

A Farce in One Act

By Macpherson Fanny

Five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, a single easy interior. Plays twenty minutes. Jack, a male, who does not appear, and who has been living on intimate platonic terms with three "bachelor girls" for a long time, is suddenly seized with a bad attack of "matrimonium tremens" and at the opening of the piece has suddenly proposed to all three of them with explosive results. The excitement is great while it lasts, but it finally appears that two of the three are protected by the vaccination of previous engagements, so that the right one gets him. Very bright, animated and funny. Well recommended.

Price, 15 cents

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THE PROFLIGATE Play in Four Acts. Seven males, five females. Scenery, three interiors, rather elaborate; costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

THE SCHOOLMISTRESS Farce in Three Acts. Nine males, seven females. Costumes, modern; scenery, three interiors. Plays a full evening.

THE SECOND MRS. TANQUERAY Play in Four Acts. Eight males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, three interiors. Plays a full evening.

SWEET LAVENDER Comedy in Three Acts. Seven males, four females. Scene, a single interior, costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

THE THUNDERBOLT Comedy in Four Acts. Ten males, nine females. Scenery, three interiors; costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

THE TIMES Comedy in Four Acts. Six males, seven females. Scene a single interior; costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

THE WEAKER SEX Comedy in Three Acts. Eight males, eight females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays a full evening.

A WIFE WITHOUT A SMILE Comedy in Three Acts. Five males, four females. Costumes, modern; scene, a single interior. Plays a full evening.

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Price, 15 Cents Each

AS YOU LIKE IT Comedy in Five Acts. Thirteen males, four females. Costumes, picturesque; scenery, varied. Plays a full evening.

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THE RIVALS Comedy in Five Acts. Nine males, five females. Scenery varied; costumes of the period. Plays a full evening.

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